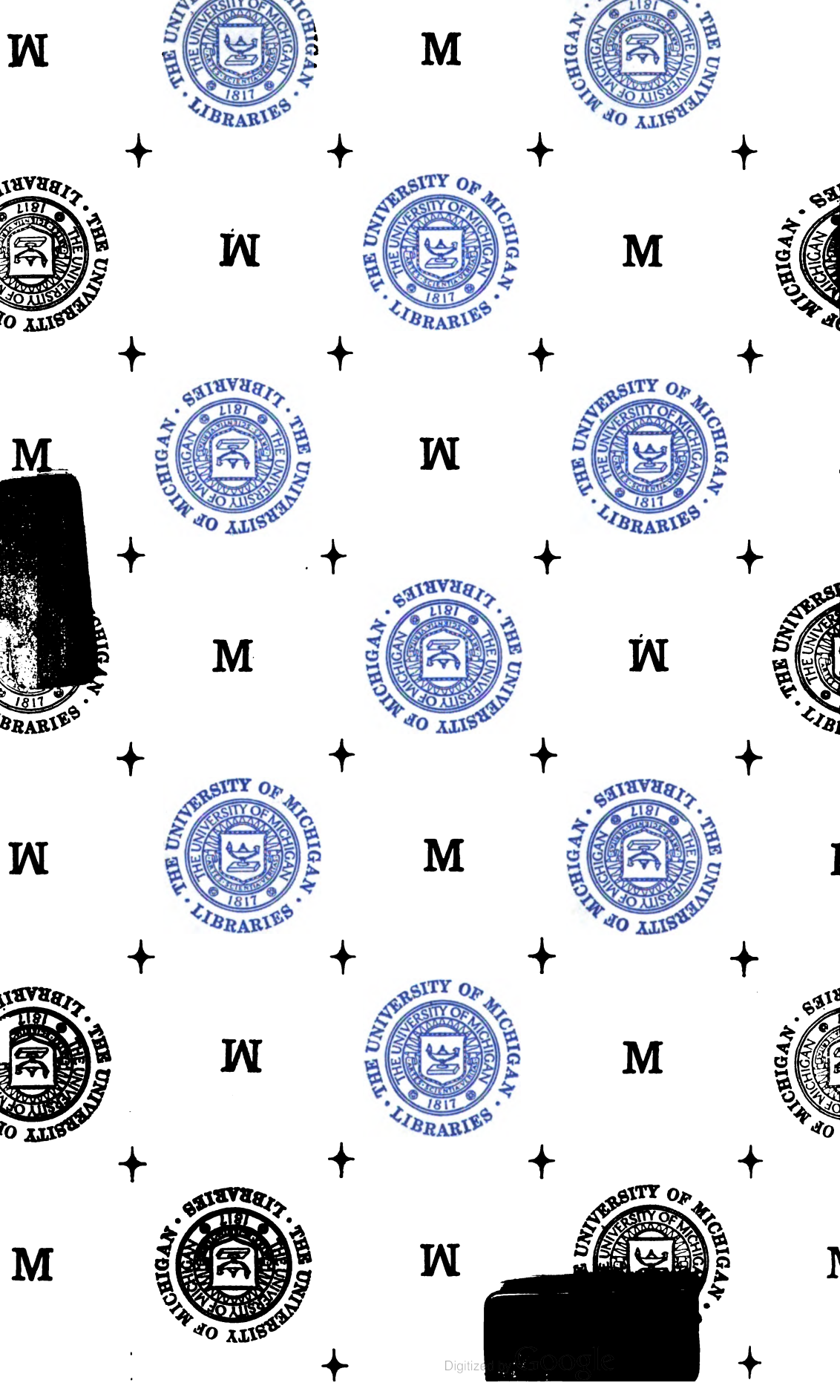

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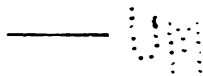


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Mores Catholici:

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.



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BOOK VI.



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MDCCCXLVI.

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MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE SIXTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.



NOW let us to the blind, external world descend, for some will say that we have hitherto seen only shadows of justice on ideal ground; yet, reader, after we shall have left the region of desires, and advanced some space along the path on which we are now entering, which seems with more realities beset, you will perhaps, at times, be well content to have incurred that charge. There may be moments in which you will feel like the pensive traveller at twilight hour, who journeys on through an obscure, cold forest, when he looks back with regret to the pleasant cloister's pale which had received him for a short space at noon; brings before his mind's eye the rich garniture of its sanctuary, and imagines that he still gazes upon each peaceful nook, which he had noted with such interest, remarking how sweetly it was for prayer and meditation meet; thinks too that he sees the solemn, hooded men, and their youthful disciples, assembled in angelic choir, leaving no place vacant, while rings aloud that quick melody,

"Te lucis ante terminum."

Your feelings perchance will resemble his, when he contrasts this scene of peace and order which he has left, with the desert

around him, dusk with horrid shades, and with his own wild state, solitary, wending he knows not whither—when o'er the broken passes, now each moment darker, there comes a gloomy sound, and a wind impetuous, sprung from conflicting vapours, drives all its might against the forest, plucks off the branches, hurling them afar, while beasts and shepherds fly.

"*Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam: quoniam ipsi saturabuntur;*" truly mystic words of the Divine Ruler, which seem at first to promise no speedy consolation; for how can the natural thirst, ne'er quenched but from the well whereof the woman of Samaria craved, be ever satiated on that earth which is not his kingdom? It is true, a confidence in the ultimate triumph of justice characterized in a very remarkable manner the men of the middle ages. "One finds," says William of Jumièges, "in almost every page of Scripture that the son's house is overthrown by the iniquities of a wicked father, and also conversely, that it is rendered firmer by the merits of a good father."* Speaking again of the conquest of England by William, the same historian beholds only fresh proof of the justice of God. "The English," he says, "were punished for the murder of the innocent Alfred, and for their remorseless massacre of Toustain;

* Hist. Norman. Lib. VII. c. 1.

and on the following night God avenged them in causing a great slaughter of the Normands, because they had sought plunder, and 'their feet had been swift to shed blood.' "Such observations are common in all writers at that time. Nevertheless, profoundly was it felt in the hearts of those thoughtful men that the beatitude arising from the spectacle of justice was not reserved for them here. Follow St. Bonaventura in his meditations on the Baptist's death: "O God, how didst thou permit this?" exclaims the seraphic doctor, "What is to be thought of this, that John should thus die, who was of such perfection and sanctity that he was thought to be Christ? Consider the greatness and excellence of John. Peter is crucified, and Paul is put to death with the sword, but yet the dignity remains to the precursor. Rome is purpled with the blood of Martyrs, but John is admirable above them all. Who so gloriously announced? Who thus filled with the Holy Ghost even in his mother's womb? Of what other man does the Church celebrate the nativity? It was he who first preached penance; it was he who baptized the King of Glory. John was a patriarch, but the chief and end of patriarchs. John was a prophet, but more than a prophet. John was an angel, but chosen among angels. John was an evangelist, but he first announced the Gospel. John was a martyr, but between the nativity and the death of Christ. He was the voice 'crying in the wilderness,' the precursor of the Judge, the herald of the Word. If now you contrast the excellence and dignity of John with the profound wickedness of those who slew him, you will have a just subject for astonishment; and, if it be allowable to say so, even of murmuring against God. For an executioner is sent to cut off his head, as if he were the vilest murderer. Behold him, then, reverently and with grief: see how he offers his neck to the executioner, and bends his knees, and, giving thanks, to God, lays down his sacred head upon some block or stone, and patiently endures the stroke. Behold in what manner John departs—the intimate friend and relation of our Lord Jesus."†

You perceive, reader, what strong language was permitted in the middle ages, in reference to the delay of justice, and you may conclude that it certainly was not

by the beatitude of vision that just men expected to be satiated on earth. How, then, you will ask, did they interpret this divine promise?

It belongs not to an historian's part, to speak of its present and literal accomplishment in the hearts of men, by the operation of these ineffable mysteries of the Passion, designed by the Eternal Wisdom to fill with divine justice the weak and fragile vessels of the human nature.* Only on what is visible to mortal eyes and productive of fruit on earth can he be required to speak; yet not less important is his evidence within just limits, to show how the sacred thirst of sweet desire might be at once partially allayed. Let us hear the gracious words again:

"Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam."

"Not the satiated, therefore," concludes Hugo de St. Victor, "but the thirsty are blessed; for," continues he, "all the good that mortal life can attain to, is to wish for good, since to possess it is reserved for the future life. If it had been 'blessed are the just,' who could have applied this to himself? But having regard to our imperfections, and compassionating our infirmity, the Divine Master pronounced those to be blessed who desired justice."† Here a clue is given to relieve us from our embarrassment, and to encourage us to proceed in the present history; for, having pointed out the thirst or the desire intellectual, which animated men in the middle ages, and being about to speak of the effects discernible, we infer from it that there is no necessity for our undertaking the task which the objectors would lay upon us, desiring us to exhibit that fulfilment which is only to take place when the Divine glory shall be revealed to human eyes, where souls shall never more hunger or thirst, but enjoy that fulness of pure and everlasting joy which the prophet tells of, when he says, "Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua."‡ No, excepting by the ardour of desire and the light of faith, that glory had not appeared during the times of which we trace the history, any more than to these latter ages, or than it will appear to those which will succeed while the present state of things endures; for whatever some vain speculators may suggest, from time to time, to entice and deceive unstable minds, the infallible page

* Hist. Norman. Lib. VII. 36.

† Meditat. Vitæ Christi, cap. 30.

* Ludovic. Blos. Scriniolum. Spirituale.

† Hugo de St. Victor, Eruditiones Theologicæ, Lib. I. tit. 133.

‡ Ps. 16.

forbids us to expect on earth the unre-sisted reign of justice—"Donec finiatur sæculum, sursum est Dominus."* It was in fact enough therefore, for our purpose, to have proved that the men of the middle ages felt sorrow at the spectacle of injustice, and bore that mystic and expressive sign which in old prophetic days was shewn to the man of God.

No one, however, required to be told that the Church, by such indications of a spiritual thirst, understood something more than barren sighs or empty symbols. "Constitutum est," says an ancient author, "veram devotionem non tam in precatationibus quam imitatione consistere."† She knew of no justice towards God, which did not include analogous duties towards man; of no beatitude for those who were unwilling to combat, and who did not exert all their efforts to win by perseverance the celestial crown.

"Non enim dormientibus divina beneficia," says St. Ambrose, "sed observantibus deferantur."‡ The language which she addressed every evening to her combatants, resembled that of a general to his troops when in an enemy's country, and might have been taken for a passage out of Thucydides, as that which gives the words of Nicias to his soldiers on the retreat from Syracuse. "Be courageous, for there is no place near where you can with indolence and effeminacy be saved," *ὅς μὴ ὅτως χαρίον ἐγγὺς ὅποι ἀν μαλακισθέντες σῶσθαιτε.*§

In the middle ages, this necessity was forcibly and briefly expressed by the letter of the mystic branch first used with such signification of Pythagoras, and, in Christian times, adopted by St. Isidore in his *Etymologies* to represent human life; the stem signifying youth, uncertain as to its way, and the right arm most arduous to denote the laborious path of justice.|| Those will, indeed, have read the last book to little purpose, who will need much assurance here; for to love and worship the divinity, was, as the Church declared, to be just. She prayed to Him who sheweth the light of his truth to those who err, that they may return into the way of justice; that all who made profession of Christianity might avoid the things which were hostile to that name, and follow those

which were suitable to it.* It was, in short, an universal conviction during the middle ages, that neither desire nor sorrow, nor prayers, nor hymns, nor festivals, nor any exercise of religion, could be more than vain, unless accompanied with works of justice, in obedience to the divine laws. Every one knew that there were two ways, as John, the monk of Cluni, observes in writing the life of St. Odo, in which men could become apostates from God; "that each man might depart from his Creator either in faith or in works; and that, as he who departed in faith was an apostate, so he who returned to the works of sin without doubt was to be considered an apostate, although he might seem to hold faith."†

"Every Catholic," says Raban Maur, "ought to cultivate all virtues equally, that being nobly adorned within and without, he may be a worthy guest of the Eternal King, and being mounted in the spiritual chariot, may pass on to the everlasting country. He ought to study prudence, he ought to be filled with understanding and justice, to be religious and humble, with fortitude to possess magnanimity, confidence, patience, perseverance, and with temperance, to be clement and moderate; and above all these, he should have peace and charity, which is the bond of perfection."‡ We have not, therefore, in the preceding book been conversing with airy visions, and unsubstantial reveries, for by the triple hunger and thirst which Bernardine of Sienna distinguishes as that of justice, of grace, and of glory, man gave three things to God, honour to his Creator, love to his Redeemer, and fear to his Judge; three things to himself, purity, watchfulness, and discipline; and three to his brethren, obedience, concord, and beneficence, according to the social relation in which he was placed towards them.§ It belonged to the wonderful character of Catholicism, in consequence of the eucharistic faith, to unite the interests of the interior, for which the mysteries of the Church provided; and those of the social life, while each of these, perhaps, naturally tended to a separation, and to be satisfied at the expense of the other. This faith, as a modern philosopher remarks, united them indissolubly; for if this mystery,

* St. August. de Consec. dist. 2.

† Instruct. novit, III. c. 4.

‡ Hom. Lib. IV. in cap. 4 Lucæ.

§ Lib. VII. 77.

|| Isidori Etymolog. I. 3.

* Third Sund. after Easter.

† Bibliotheca Cluniacensis, 49.

‡ Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, Lib. III. c. 27.

§ S. Bernardini Senensis, Liv. III. de Beat. Serm.

which was itself only an initiation into the mysteries of the future existence, carried the soul beyond the present order, on the other hand, the disposition which was strictly necessary to every one who approached it, was the accomplishment of all the obligations of common life, and particularly of those which one was most disposed to disdain. Extending its vivifying influence to the two extremities of the moral world, it reached at once the most humble duties and ecstasy; and the same actions which made the soul enter into the angelic society, drew it back by the line of justice into the society of men.

In retracing the manners of the Christian Society of past ages, far be it from any disciple of the humble school, to imitate the style of those modern writers, who seem to consider their own personal judgment as an infallible tribunal, by which they may judge as with the balance of Omniscience, the thoughts and deeds of mortals, declaring where fell the just, and when was their fall irreparable.

There is nothing in common, between the Christian philosophy and this pretension to behold human affairs with the same eyes as those of Providence, and to judge them with the calm security of eternal justice,—this high historical optimism, which shows truth and error as merely relative and never absolute,—these sonorous apologies of the victory according to which the present is always in the right, in short, this dramatic development of humanity, of which each act is to be represented in succession.*

Ah! who are we, to sit in judgment thus to determine what men were guilty, and what innocent, in these ancient times? “Nullo modo eorum innocentia coronamur, nullo modo eorum iniquitate damnamur,” as St. Augustin said respecting the Donatists.†

What is to us the number of the just, or of the unjust, in past ages? It will be sufficient if we can say of all men with truth, in the words of the ancient poet; “neque quæ rectè faciunt culpo, neque quæ delinquant amo.” And yet with what caution and timidity should even this be uttered! For who is to judge them? The historians of the middle age never presume to explain the troubled course of the world, by tracing the secret sources of disorder, which they knew were often hidden from

the eyes even of contemporaries. Paschasius Radbert, in his life of Wala, speaking of the events which attended the dethronement of the emperor Louis, says, “there is no one who can believe, no one who can conceive, the things that were done, in what way they were done, or how many were done. There is no one who can understand why or how they happened; who were the authors of the evil, or who of the good.”*

Men must wait for that burning day when the Supreme and Omniscient Judge will make inquiry, and will choose them as a man chooses his son who hath served him; and then O man, as a voice from heaven declareth, “videbitis quid sit inter justum et iniquum, et inter servientem Deo et eum qui non servit ei.”

Modern historians have never any doubts respecting the secret motives and causes of actions and events. All is unveiled to their eyes. Nothing is left obscure, and as there is more ingenuity required to discover a bad than a virtuous motive, it would be always easy to foresee, before consulting them, what view they would take of actions. Du Fresnoy says, that this alone should lead us to suspect Davilla and Varillas, and esteem their histories but slightly.

Even without weighing the historic difficulty, it is clearly absurd for any men to write as if they were themselves removed to an infinite distance above the wisest and greatest souls that were given to the times which they pass in review. Acute little men, but certainly neither humble nor wise, pass thus like beings of a different order from mortals, through the walks of history, as through those of real life, rashly judging rather from their own preconceived fantasies, than from any calm and cautious scrutiny of things, and then pronounce their sentence with a cool, incomparable assurance, that but ill conceals the fierce and turbulent passions which are often raging beneath the surface. St. Augustin well describes such men, styling them, “curiosum genus ad cognoscendum vitam alienam, desidiosum ad corrigendam suam.”†

In proceeding to speak of the admirable fruits of justice which characterized the men of Catholic ages, I am prepared to witness the incredulity of many; for as Nicias said of the Athenians, respecting what had passed in Sicily, I know that

* De la Philosophie au commencement du XIX siècle.
† De Unico bapt. cap. 16.

* Lib. II.

† Confess. Lib. X. cap. 3.

the moderns in general will not judge of these things as they really are, and as those know who beheld them, ἀλλ' ἐξ ὧν ἄν τις εἰ λέγων διαβάλλοι. It is from whatever may be advanced by any who can speak well, by any vain flashy man declaiming, that they will be convinced.*

One must be prepared also to witness more than incredulity. Many historical writers resemble those democratic leaders who used to denounce as enemies of the people all who questioned the justice of their particular views. Like Anathagoras the Syracusan, who on the approach of the Athenians being as Thucydides says, the man most credited by the multitude, cried out, "Whoever is of a different opinion, is either not a liberal man, or not a friend to the constitution of the state."† "This is an age," says Sylvio Pellico, "in which to lie and to mistrust to excess, are things so common, that they are hardly regarded as vices.‡ Speak with twenty men in private, nineteen will only express their horror against such and such persons. All seem inflamed with indignation against iniquity, as if each alone of all the world were just. To calumniate all the individuals of whom society is composed, with the exception of a few friends, appears to be the universal wish." It is the same with writers of history.

If these insatiable but fickle wanderers were asked, as was the original tempter and calumniator of mankind, whence came they? their reply might be in his words; "circuvi terram, et perambulavi eam." Like the troop described by Æschylus,

εὐμήχανοι
δὲ καὶ τέλειοι, κακῶν
τε μύημονες σέμναι,

they show themselves at every turn ingenious, not forgetful of evils, and so pass on through regions which their breath has withered, to exercise their inglorious dishonoured office, insensible to mortal interests, and alienated from heaven.§ The old Roman historian expresses always a reluctance to credit a narrative of turpitude, saying, "non libet crederi."|| But nothing seems to give such pleasure to our historians, who pretend to represent the middle age, as the discovery of some deed of atrocity, in an ancient chronicle, though

indeed they need it not; for with them no might, nor greatness in mortality can censure 'scape: "back-wounding calumny, the whitest virtue strikes." Their charges are general, and for that reason alone, their testimony would have been rejected by Socrates, who used always to say, οὐ ζητῶ πανάμωμον ἄνθρωπον.* In fact, they have praise for no one. "He rides tolerably well, but what is it to a Hippocentaur?" Thus they introduce into history, what Pasquier styles the Sçavoir courtesan, far more dangerous than the pedantic knowledge, for this consists in seeking the reputation of ability, by never giving praise to any object, however excellent, by refusing admiration; always having some defect to condemn, either in the style, or conduct, or choice, or motive, of the actions; or if it be impossible to do so by significant gestures, that others may believe there is still something wrong.†

Novalis judges better of the office of an historian, saying, "When I think upon the general right, it appears to me, that an historian ought necessarily to be a poet; for it is a poet alone who can understand how to connect events together properly. In their narratives, I have remarked with calm delight, the tender feeling which is evinced for the mysterious spirit of life. There is more truth in their relations than in learned histories. Although their personages and events are invented, yet the sense in which they are conceived is true to nature."

Whoever approaches modern history, with a sincere wish to avoid error, must bear in mind that it is a domain which hath been for three hundred years constantly infested with false guides, who, from different motives, were all equally disposed to lead men astray, by calumniating the manners of the ancient Catholic civilization. In the first rank came the rash judging proselytes of the new religions, who sought to justify their separation, by denouncing the number of the reprobate, as if their reform was to extend even to what had been determined by heaven. "They behold," says Louis of Blois, "a great heap of straw in the Lord's granary, from which they judge that there is no grain amidst it." Paleas vident, grana non vident, vel videre nolunt.‡ After these came the Rationalists; and it

* Thucyd. Lib. VII. c. 48.

† Id. Lib. VI. 36.

‡ Dei Doveri degli uomini?

§ Eumenid. 381.

|| Livy IV. 29.

* Plato Protagoras.

† Lettres de Pasquier, Liv. X. 7.

‡ Ludovic. Blos. Epist. ad Florentium.

is a curious and just remark of Bonald, that the same doctrines which deny the original corruption of man, always exaggerate his social corruption.* In fine, the atheists and hypocrites laid the most dangerous snares of all, for being animated with an immortal hatred against Catholicism, they formed a diabolic school, which had its secret traditions, by means of which they were most skilled in all the cunning wiles of deception. These were the men who interrogated history with so much the greater severity, as their deductions and admonitions proceeded from a source different from charity. What is this cry from the broad way trodden by them who are not true to God or to themselves, which yet sounds like the voice that in the days of Damian, came from the desert? In the ages of faith, it would have deceived no one. Ives de Chartres was told by some calumnious persons, that the manners of the monks in his diocese were corrupt; but that holy and acute bishop, after hearing their testimony, came to the conclusion, that they were not to be believed; "*quibus non est credendum de aliena injustitia, quamdiu non discesserint a sua.*"†

Severe and unforgiving men, do you not fear to have some searching questions addressed in turn to yourselves? You do, indeed, reprove with indignation, the crimes, real or imputed, of the ancient Christian society. You proclaim many things respecting abuse, superstition, and hypocrisy, which might have been, and which very often were delivered by S. Bernard, or a Gregory. But whence to you this zeal? The moral discourse which the creature, eminent in beauty once, addresses to our Saviour, in the immortal poem of *Paradise Regained*, is sufficient to undeceive us with regard to such professions. Yours is an old comedy.

Claudius accusat mœchos, Catilina Cethegum.

The world, which once heard a Gracchus inveigh against sedition, will hardly be convinced that it has entered upon a new epoch, by hearing a Pedro of Brazil accuse the monastic orders of having degenerated from their original sanctity. Sooth, it is paying a poor compliment to the sagacity of modern times, when these writers, in which France and even Spain have lately been so prolific, expect their

readers to believe that an attachment to the manners of the ancient Catholic civilization, is synonymous with robust profligacy in every form. The weak credulity with which such compositions are received, presents no unprecedented phenomenon; nor is even the artful nature of their calumny due to any progress in the science of deception. In protestations of regard for justice and morality the pagan oracles were equally loud; in allusion to which St. Augustin said, "the malignity of demons, unless it transformed itself into an angel of light could not have fulfilled its object."* Indeed, there is no great difficulty here; for when disposed to triumph in their own social progress, they turn round with exultation to display, not the obedience and charity, the filial love, fidelity, and honour of their contemporaries, but the different signs, real or imagined, of commercial prosperity, national glory, and of a wondrous material civilization, the goodness of their manufactures, goodness of their laws, goodness of their police, goodness of their prisons perhaps, "as if," to use the words of St. Augustin, "it were the greatest good of man to have all things good excepting himself."†

"The eyes of perverse men meet with scandals every where, but," says an ancient ascetic, "the good man enjoys tranquillity and repose." Who can be deceived as to the cause which troubles the repose of these modern writers, so shocked at the profligacy of the middle ages, when, in order to prove it, we find them furnishing out their pages with the most detestable pictures, and adopting a style which cannot be reconciled with a very tender solicitude for the virtues of their own time? No, let them be ingenious, let them compose books that may indicate ever such extensive, such multifarious research, still, when all is done, when they have displayed before us all the regions of the bad, their evidence must be rejected as partial, and their judgment as untrue. Without doubt it is an easy task from the class of facetious writers, from the author of the *Fabliaux*, from the troubadours, and the poets who favoured the religious innovators, to draw a picture of the middle ages most inviting to a licentious imagination, and favourable to the conclusions of those who advocated the overthrow of the ancient society; but where philosophy is heard, collections of

* Du Divorce.

† Ivonis Carnot. Epist. CX.

* De Civitat. Dei, Lib. II. 26.

† Ib. Lib. III. I.

this kind cannot be received as evidence, and, therefore, with such researches we need have nothing to do. I shall follow Plato's rule, *καὶ τὸ μὲν αἰσχρὸν καὶ ἀνόσιον οὐτε παρίεμαι ἔγωγε, οὐδέ λέγω** πολλοῖς γὰρ καὶ ἄλλοις ἰμνεῖν ταῦτα ἐπιμελές, καὶ εἰς τὸν πάντα μελήσει χρόνον.*

Nevertheless, to these historic walks, reader, come not expecting to be led through a region of pure serenity, unclouded and untroubled. "Good with bad expect to hear;" supernal grace contending with sinfulness of men. "We do not," says St. Clemens Alexandrinus, "receive simply all philosophy, but that concerning which Socrates speaks in Plato; for there are, as they say, round the mysteries, many rod-bearers, but few Bacchanals, πολλοὶ μὲν καρθηκοφόροι, Βάκχοι δέ τε παῦροι, obscurely signifying that many are called but few chosen."†

"In all places and times of the saints," says Thomas à Kempis, "there have been good and evil, faithful and incredulous, devout and dissolute, benevolent and perverse, spiritual and carnal; and the good by their patience advanced daily to greater good, and the evil, like smoke, evanesced in the malice of their own desires."‡

It is from the heights of this ascetic philosophy that we should survey the various ages of the world, rather than from any ground, however agreeable, of historic theory, which can never be perfectly solid, since it fails, even under the genius of that illustrious Catholic historian, of whose views some Protestant writers have availed themselves, in contrasting what they represent as the manners of the primitive times with those of the middle ages. What skills it to declaim about primitive times, when we find St. Paul telling the Corinthians that there are vices among them which are not even among the Pagans; and when we can read the account which St. Cyprian gives of the manners of a Christian society in his age?

"Recollect," says Benedict Aretino, "how many hereticks endeavoured to stain the tunic of Christ in early times, and what corruption of manners arose from the Donatists, Manichæans, Priscilianists, and other monsters of that kind, from which the Church, during the middle ages, was in great measure free. What evil men, were opposed to Athanasius, Basil, and Chrysostom? If the multitude of martyrs

was great, there were many also who through fear or ambition denied Christ and returned to idolatry. On the other hand, if you will look at the 'history' of the last 400 years, you will find in the first place, those two great lights, than which none ever shone with greater lustre or sanctity, Francis and Dominick, from whom such institutions arose as antiquity had never seen, producing an incredible multitude of saints and of illustrious men, by whom the Christian faith has been so much aided, that men have learned to live in a manner far more Christian than before; for many vices in the world have been by their means either diminished or wholly extirpated."*

The language of the primitive fathers will never sanction an exclusive admiration for their times. "It is certain, brethren," says St. Augustin, "that all we who are in the body of the Lord, and who remain in him, that he also may remain in us, must of necessity in this world until the end live amidst the wicked. I do not say amidst those wicked who blaspheme Christ, for it is rare now to find any one with their tongue blaspheme him, but there are many who do so in their lives. Of necessity, therefore, amongst such men we must live, even until the end."†

St. Augustin was obliged to warn the catechumens against being scandalized by the lives of unworthy Christians, in words which would well become the Catholic missionary of the present day, addressing his separated brethren, who might well warn the illustrious Protestant from being unwilling to be in the Church where they are, or from wishing to be there such as they are.‡ "Let not the vain Pagans," saith he, "deceive you, or the false Jews, or the deceitful hereticks, 'nec non in ipsa Catholica mali Christiani, tanto nocentiores quanto interiores inimici.'§ You, therefore, believing these things, beware of temptations, lest that enemy should deceive you, not only by means of those who are without the Church, whether Pagans, or Jews, or heretics, but also by those whom you may behold living ill within the Catholic Church; that you may not imitate those who are either abandoned to luxurious and shameful pleasures, or addicted to vain and illicit curiosity, whether of

* Bened. Accolti Aretini de Præstantia virorum sui ævi dialog. Thesaur. Antiq. Italia, tom. IX.

† St. August. Tract. in Joan. 27.

‡ St. August. de Catechizandis rudibus.

§ Id. De fide rerum quæ non videntur.

* Epist. VII. + Stromat. Lib. I. c. 19.

† Serm. I. Part 5.

theatrical exhibitions, or of remedies, or of diabolic divinations, or engaged in pomp and avarice, and pride, or in any life which the law condemns and punishes. You must not suppose that these perverse men, although they enter the walls of the church, will hereafter enter the kingdom of heaven, because at the proper time they will be separated, if they do not previously separate themselves from the evil.”*

The middle ages were ages of crime, and in that respect they form no singular epoch in the world's history; but mark, it was crime along with infinite pity, infinite horror for sin, and infinite desire of justice; and on this side what parallel to them can we find in human annals? Amidst social disorders what multitudes were obeying the call to perfection, and at the voice of the preacher leaving all to follow Christ! There were wars and crimes in abundance, of which I shall hereafter speak, but luxury, more cruel than arms, did not avenge the wrongs of the oppressed. Assuredly, there are names belonging to our ancient history of horrible dispraise, recalling the deeds of men upon whom the multiplied villanies of nature did swarm, men possessed by seven demons that drank iniquity like water. Each generation had sad experience of all malicious acts abhorred in heaven; but on all sides what cries of horror,

ὡς δίκαι, ὡς ὁσίοι τ' ἐπὶ πύλων;

what a profound sense of injustice!

“Iniquitatem odio habui et abominatus sum!”

what innocence, goodness, sanctity, and wisdom: “custodivit anima mea testimonia tua: et dilexit ea vehementer!” What a minority, to use a modern phrase, opposed to the wretched, godless crew!† Instead, too, of imitating the malice of our adversary, and gathering evil from good, misconstruing or abusing it, men in those times gathered good out of the gross and palpable evil which existed around them. “I confess,” says Muratori, “that when young, I was of the opinion of those admirers of ancient Greece and Rome who thought that there was nothing but horror and barbarism in the history of the middle ages. I need not say how completely I had to free my mind from that error. In

these ages which are stigmatized by so many, there were not wanting admirable princes, and great examples of fortitude, sanctity, and other virtues. There are many reasons why we should embrace and love the history of Europe from the decline of the Roman empire till the sixteenth century.”*

“You speak of the evils of these times, but I maintain,” says Benedict Aretino, “without fear of being misled, that crimes were not practised openly as in the ancient world, nor so frequently; that there were many nations by whom they were held in horror, and that almost all who professed the religion of Christ were more timid to do wrong; so that I am astonished how any man of learning can assert, without blushing, that he prefers the ancient civilization to that of the middle ages.”†

Our ancient writers remark the importance of producing in history things reprehensible, as well as those worthy of praise.‡ That the crimes of the unjust were often designedly, and almost with affectation, brought into prominent relief for the instruction of men, is a fact that can be witnessed even in the wild fabling of chivalrous romance, which furnished, in many respects, a true picture of cotemporaneous manners. Thus we find a lady saying to a knight in Gyron le Courtois, “Certes, you speak not as a knight errant, but as a villain and envious knight, and I doubt not you are as vile in deeds as you are in words! and sooth for your villany I am greatly desirous to know you: for as one desires to know men of honour and virtue on account of their goodness, so in like manner, one desires to know bad men on account of their wickedness, that one may know where one ought to shun them.”§

What is it that demands tears from the just and thoughtful, that desolates the heart, and leaves it almost without strength or hope? It is not the crimes of the wicked—it is not the persecution of the Church, to which the world and the Christian society have been always accustomed. It is, if it be not a solecism to utter such a sentence, the assent of the good. (Edipus of Colonna declares that “he knows no just man who praises and defends all causes alike;”|| but for what degree or form of

* In Scriptores rer. Italic. Præfat.

† De præstantia virorum sui ævi dialog. The-saur. antiq. Italiæ IX.

‡ Wadding an. Ann. Epist. ad lector.

§ Ed. cf. XXII.

|| V. 748.

• St. Augst. de Catechiz. rudibus.

† Mabill. Præfat. in V. S. Benedict, s. I.

injustice have not the moderns invented an excuse, and where shall one find a head that is not crammed with all the sophisms which England, France, and Germany have produced during forty years? It is the men who come forward as the just, who now condemn the just, and find a thousand reasons for absolving their persecutors. None are so sure of being left defenceless as the innocent and holy. The Poet says in general of this earthly world, that "here to do harm is often laudable: to do good sometimes accounted dangerous folly." What would he have said had he seen later times? In the general movement and agitation of minds individual reason seems to have lost its power of distinguishing in morals, as if the tree of knowledge, for which we gave up all, had lost its ancient virtue. Amidst the general wreck of intelligences, the very sense of justice seems to have perished. Every thing innocent in humanity, and noble in the poetry of heroes—every thing that was formerly of good report, and enshrined in the hearts of men and women with universal veneration, is now, as if by common consent, pronounced to be either a superstation, or a false principle, or a matter of indifference, perhaps even of scorn; and no longer for the children of perdition, but for the just, dishonoured in their own eyes by witnessing to what degradation their moral nature is subjected, seems reserved the crimson brow. This is what the sinful nations, the people laden with iniquity, have come to, for having forsaken the Lord, and blasphemed the Holy One of Israel.

In the middle ages, which men stigmatize as barbarous, an act of injustice or dishonour was regarded with a feeling of abhorrence which could not be uttered. The disdainful and hardly translatable expression of *Æschylus*, *κατάπυστος*, "a thing to be spit upon," is the only word that can convey any idea of the intensity of that indignation.* Nothing seemed more admirable to Marsilius Ficinus in the character of Lorenzo de Medicis than this horror which he always evinced of bad men.† On the other hand, the joy inspired by just deeds, and by beholding the sweet and gracious order of holy institutions, gave birth to rapturous strains, which indicated an habitual and almost angelic felicity. To speak of justice, and to recount high deeds of virtue, every one

sought, whether in grave and solemn history, or in fabulous and poetic symbol, and since the draught is grateful ever as their thirst is keen, no words may speak the fulness of content. Religion, and chivalry inspired by religion, existed amidst all the disorders of the worst part of society. "It is precisely this contrast," says a modern historian, "which constitutes the great characteristic of the middle ages. Contemplate the heroic times of all other societies, and you find no trace of a similar contradiction. The practice and the theory of manners are nearly conformable. It is not seen that the ideas of men were purer or more elevated than their daily actions. The heroes of Homer have no scruples or sorrow for their brutality and egotism. Their moral sense is not better than their conduct. It is the same every where else excepting in our middle ages. There crimes and disorders abound, and men have evidently in their minds and imaginations lofty and pure desires and ideas. Principles were better than actions. Their notions of virtue are much more developed, their ideas of justice incomparably better than what is practised around them, or than what they often practise themselves. A certain moral ideal soars above this stormy society, and draws the attention and respect of men." "Christianity, no doubt," he adds, "was the cause of this fact, which is, at all events, unquestionable. It presents itself every where in studying the middle ages; in the popular poetry, as well as in the exhortations of the priests. Throughout, the moral understanding of men rises and aspires far above their lives."*

Let it be observed, that in ages of faith crime assumes a still darker and more diabolic form, at least in the imagination, than in times when the supernatural grace and light have been withdrawn. The vicious, like scorpions, when the sun darts its brightest flames, are most inflamed with the poison of their malignity when the sun of justice most serenely shines. It is only after knowing the perfect good, that men can know absolute evil; in point of fact, indeed, a countenance of Judas would probably be found in the vicious quarters of London or Berlin sooner than in the Borghetto at Milan, where Leonardo da Vinci went every morning and evening, for more than a year, in search of one, without success: but in the order of con-

* Eumenid. 68.

† Epist. Lib. VI.

* Guizot, Cours d'Hist. IV. 6.

ception, it is different, and therefore the Don Juan of Lord Byron is but a poor scholar of Moliere's Don Juan, a mere boyish libertine. The Spanish Don Juan, as Moliere paints him, was a grand catholic conception, which a mind not initiated in the mysteries of faith, or narrowed by the modern philosophy, can scarcely comprehend. In an age of faith, impiety and injustice, as we have remarked, inspire a kind of terror and astonishment which we find in those serious comedies of the middle age. In our times they only furnish episodes in the style of Fielding, of which the heroes seem poor silly youths—poor masks wishing to play Satan's part, and yet whose simple humanity appears constantly under their infernal costume.

"Again," as Bonald observes, "in Christian ages and nations, amongst the acceptable people, followers of good works, nothing is remarked by repining and censorious minds but vices, because virtues are its ordinary state and alone authorized, in the same manner as classical enthusiasts remark nothing but virtues in the pagans, because with them vice was the common state, and permitted by the laws." In times of general corruption, every one is said to be just—"all are honourable men." In ages of spiritual illumination, the secular poet will pursue the saintly lamentation, and say,

—"The just are few in number;
But they neglected; a'rice, envy, pride,
Three fatal sparks, have set the hearts of all
On fire."*

Hear Richard of St. Victor commenting on the Divine words, "*Omne caput languidum, et omne cor mœrens;*" "the Lord knows his work; nor can the greatness or multiplicity of its diseases escape the Chief Physician. Behold, he tells you in these words what is the excess of the disease—infirmity from within, and wounds from without; and to crown all, a contempt for the remedy; '*Non est,*' he adds, '*circumligata nec curata medicamine, neque fota oleo.*' Behold our evils. Learn, then, O man, and if thou disdainest to be taught by man, learn at least from him who teaches man knowledge; learn, I say, the extent of your evils, and of your misery; for by these exterior, you are warned to correct your interior maladies; to know that you are weak in will, weak in affec-

tion, weak in action."* Moreover in the middle ages the vices opposed to the Christian religion were open and avowed, and therefore less dangerous to the intellectual than to the material interests of of society. History and poetry professed then to tell of good deeds and their opposite, between which the line of demarcation was broad. There were not professions and employments sanctioned by the custom of society, and supposed to be honourable because profitable, which required in those who pursued them the very opposite qualities from those which belong to the Christian life, though they may be consistent with the morality and honour of those who are in sight of heaven reprobate. What are now examples were then crimes. A calumniator, a detractor, was not concealed to himself as to others by having the conduct of a journal. A lover of discord and opposition, and an accuser, was not presentable among Christians under the name of a public speaker. A hater of all religious and social institutions under the influence of Catholicism, was not honoured as a liberal statesman, who conceded to the times what was just. A despiser of God and the celestial life was not regarded as a man of practical abilities, and enlightened philosophy. In short, what remarkably distinguishes the middle ages from later times, was the impossibility of any one proceeding by degrees from step to step in the employment and cultivation of dispositions all deemed sufficiently honest by society, until at length unawares he found himself placed in a situation in which it would be impossible for him to discharge the essential duties imposed upon all who desired to be real and living members of the Christian church.

In ages of faith, as in Catholic nations at present, the manners of some persons became corrupt. A youth of noble and generous nature, might be deceived in the way of which Solomon bid him beware. But in later times, and in the northern nations, the very rule of manners and laws became corrupt, and nature's frailty was depraved, not only into an art, but into a system of philosophy. In the former, disorders were personal, and sought the shade; in the latter, they were published and authorized; and while the profligate Italian laid his dark scheme to seduce his

* Dante Infer.

* Richardi S. Victoris de statu interioris hominis. Pars I. Tract. I. c. I.

neighbour's wife, the grave and formal German carried her off in virtue of a judicial sentence, and married her before a notary.*

Travellers have remarked, with Bourgoign, that the external decency of manners at Madrid was such, that the most shameful pleasures were obliged to assume a veil of mystery. The public opinion, as well as the police allowing of nothing to offend the eye, or endanger the imagination.† In fact, the error of the philosophic sin, beyond the sphere of secret societies, is the error of a much later period, constituting this last heresy, which now desolates the earth. Abailard loudly protested that he had never conceived or uttered such a blasphemy;‡ and certainly no trace of it is found in his writings.

With respect to the professed satirists and censors of the middle age, I would say, "To know of some is well, but of the rest silence may best beseeem."

There are things, as a writer of the middle ages observes, which it is better to pass over in silence, than to handle, lest the enemy should inject their defilement into the secret recesses of the mind.§

The first reflection suggested by the *Fabliaux* is undoubtedly sad. *Le-grand-d'Aussy*, concludes at once from their gross and licentious expressions, that in these ages the corruption of manners was at its height, under the sanction of religion. An historian is, however, not so quick in his conclusions. At all times he is aware that there have been vices, and that the age of the troubadours and minstrels was not exempt from this sad law of humanity. But the question is, Did the *Fabliaux*, and the tales of poets, express accurately the society of these times? The authors of these *Fabliaux* were people greedy of gain, who went from town to town courting the favour of the frivolous and profligate; and as priests are obliged to give an example of purity of life, it is not wonderful that the malignity of such persons should be exerted in ascribing parts to them which were inconsistent with virtue. It has been said lately that the *Fabliaux* expressed the party of the opposition of those times: but a distinction should be made here. The licentious poets of the twelfth century never dreamt that their songs could injure either the Church or the State.

They made a bad history of a bad monk, because the contrast was amusing, since that order of men were generally followers of perfection. But you will not find a word to warrant our supposing that they attacked the monastic spirit. The Church was sacred to them; they had faith; but their satiric vein must have vent; and they bring a monk on the stage without the least idea that religion will lose any thing. *Tartuffe* would then in some respects have been an innocent comedy; for as *Laurentie* observes, "it is necessary to pass through the modern civilisation, to fancy that the unmasking of hypocrisy can be a satire upon religion."* That these men were actuated by a thirst for justice, in making their representations of the society around them is a modern discovery: as in the fifteenth century, the men who stood most in need of reform were probably those who cried out loudest for reformation.

Dante meets one of the troubadours in purgatory. It was the elegant *Sordello*; and he places another in hell, the warlike *Bertram de Born*, whom he represents as a bloody and headless trunk, walking with his head in his hands. *Robert de Mar-darolles* confesses that he composed his amorous songs, merely because it was the custom of poets; and *Pierre de Craon* declares that his was an hereditary taste, his family, from father to son, having always made them. One of these old satirists, who railed against every order, not respecting any class, or any individual, however venerable, who visited the monasteries of *Clairvaux*, and *Cluni*, for the sole purpose of searching out matter to furnish out his satirical poems has the good sense and candour to confess that he does not believe that any one will give attention or credit to what he writes.

"Parce qu'ils ont vu que j'aimoye
Plus que nul beau soulas et joye
Et que j'avois aussi grand métier
Comme nul de moi préchier."†

Nor is it so certain, after all, that these calumnious wanderers met with great encouragement. The old *Trouvère* says in the preface to the romance of the *Dame de Fayel*, and the *Sire de Coucy*, that poets or *trouvères* are laughed at by some people, who say, "qu'il a mal trouvé lui qui n'a pu trouver un logis." It does not reflect

* *Bonald du Divorce.* + Vol. II. 353.

† In *Apol.* ad fid.

‡ *Thom. a Kempis, Epistolæ I.*

* *Bibliothèque choisie, Recueil de Fabliaux, introduct.*

† *L'Abbé Massieu Hist. de la Poésie Française, 129.*

discredit on the age, when these men, so greedy of money, complain that theirs is a bad profession, and that one may die of hunger, though ever so well provided with scandalous and licentious tales. The jongleurs of the present day have no such complaint to make. Besides, it is a fact, that the works were estimated at the time according to their merits, and denounced accordingly. Gerson, the Chancellor of the University of Paris, endeavoured to have the romance of the Rose declared to be heretical; and alluding to the judgment passed on Ovid's books, by Augustus, he exclaims, "O heavens! amongst pagans a pagan judge condemns a pagan who wrote a doctrine which enticed men to vain love; and amongst Christians such a work is supported, and praised, and defended." For this declamation of the moralist, we must make allowance; for the fact was not so. Although that romance was tolerated by some, in consequence of the virtuous interpretations put upon the objectionable passages, yet we find Christine de Pisan, all of whose works breathe so pure and lofty a morality, denouncing it as infamous in her epistles; and saying to her son,

"Si tu veulx et chastement vivre,
De la Rose ne lis le livre,
Ne Ovide de l'Art d'Amer
Dont l'exemple sert a blasier."

She added, in a prose epistle to Goutier Col, who had undertaken to defend Jehan de Meun, that the romance of the Rose was "une exhortation de très abominables mœurs, et confortoit la vie dissolue."

The ancient councils, as well as that of Trent, had expressly forbidden the reading of all such books as were calculated to corrupt the manners of men; and it even became a general opinion that such books as the Decameron of Boccaccio were essentially heretical, and therefore, on grounds of faith, could not be read by any Catholic who adhered to his profession. Men of the reformed philosophy, while purchasing its early editions at their weight in gold, and multiplying them in a cheap form for the people, were speaking of "the superstition" of those still faithful to the ancient manners, who, on discovering a packet of manuscripts in the house in which Boccaccio had inhabited, immediately committed it to the flames.* Under the influence of the Catholic religion, we find princes and noblemen, and philosophers

of the lay society, whose names will be for ever associated with the learning of the ancients, speaking with the greatest horror of the classic poets, on account of their obscenity. "What more detestable," cries Francis Picus, of Mirandula, "than the turpitude of the ancient poets, which should be wholly removed and extirpated from a Christian. I honour and love Christian poets, such as Prudentius, Sedulius, Damasus, and in our age, Baptist the Carmelite, that other hope of Mantua, Ludovicus Pictorius of Ferrara, Ugolinus Verinus of Florence, and many others."*

It might be questioned whether any scholars in modern times are inspired with the same enthusiasm for the ancient learning, though certainly no one appears to regard with the same suspicion its moral tendency. One can understand how men like the poet Belleau, who always kept company with the profane, on first hearing the peculiar phraseology of the religious innovators, might naturally suppose that what distinguished them was a religious tone of conversation; but this very error seems like a punishment for their former lives, for had they not before associated exclusively with the profane, they would never have thought chastity of language a mark by which they could detect a Huguenot.† The fact is, that by far the greatest number of the licentious poets of a later period, either avowedly or secretly favoured the religious innovators, and, indeed, were themselves important agents in bringing about that revolution. There is not a little connexion between the gross licentiousness of Chaucer and the looseness of his faith. No one need be told after what kind of justice the early innovators thirsted, when they pillaged shrines, and sought nuns in marriage. Manners, however corrupt, did not interfere with the new character which they assumed, and the old man which they threw off, was not exactly that condemned in the Gospel.

Harrington, the translator of Ariosto, the courtier and godson of Queen Elizabeth, to whom he dedicated his work, so infamously gross, was nevertheless the object of the highest admiration with the English of that age. Buchanan was another of these reform-preaching poets, whose verses were often indecent. Clement Marot was abandoned to the vilest licen-

* De Studeo div. et hum. Philosophiæ, Lib. I. cap. 6.

† Gouget, Bibliothèque Française, tom. XII. 296.

* Blume, Iter Italicum, II. 90.

tiousness, while translating the Psalms. John Bouchet, unmasking the vice and hypocrisy of the innovators, expresses the deepest regret that this man should have so fallen by heretical presumption, seeing that "he was a true poet born." The mocking satires from the shop of Rabelais, were certainly not indicative of the pure and blessed thirst. Des Perieres contributed, at the same time, to the Queen of Navarre's novels and to the hymns of the Huguenots. We must except, indeed, Grevin, who published a satire upon Pierre Ronsard, for having condemned the innovators in his "Discours des Misères du Temps," and yet Grevin published many pieces of gallantry little in accordance with the character of a reformer of religion. Even one of the ministers, the Sieur de Mont-Dieu, has the equity to blame Theodore Beza for the amorous fantasies which he formed, and which so enchanted him that they broke forth in his verses.* As for the objects of their calumny, it should be remembered that those immoral censors who attacked the clergy, like Jacquemart, Gelée, and a thousand others, are equally severe upon all other classes of men, upon magistrates, nobles and kings; and, besides, what can any historian infer from the clergy having been insulted in a treatise on the art of love? These severe satirists of the monks, were also distinguished by being the bitter calumniators of the female sex, and that is another reason why their whole testimony should be altogether rejected. John de Meun does not believe that there is one virtuous woman in the world.

"Prudes femmes, par Saint Denis
Autant en est que de Phenix."

Lines, methinks, which it would be difficult to match for their absurdity, blasphemy, and falsehood. Nay, he affirms that there never was, and that there never will be a virtuous and chaste woman. After this, it is pleasant to hear him lash the vices of his age, moralizing and accusing the monks, and arguing thus :

"Tel a robe Religieuse
Donques il est Religieux !
Cet argument est vitieux."

I am aware, indeed, that it is not sufficient to reveal the infamy of such men, in order to be justified in rejecting in general

* Gouget, Bibliothèque Française, tom. XII. 236.

the testimony of the satirists and censors of the ancient Christian society. Fools may speak wisely, what wise men do foolishly; and St. Augustin proposeth the question, "How doth an unjust man praise and blame rightly, many things in the manners of other men? By what rules does he judge? Where are those rules written, unless in the book of that light which is called truth?"* "That book of light," says Duns Scotus, "is the divine Intelligence; and in that light the unjust man sees what things are done justly, 'igitur in illa luce videmus à qua imprimitur in cor hominis, justitia illa autem est lux increata.'"+

From such questions and sentences we may infer that the great masters of the middle ages, would have sanctioned the rejection of no evidence, on any ground but that of its intrinsic worthlessness. The existence of such writers, however, is not sufficient proof to justify the modern opinion respecting the state of morality in their time. It was in the reign of St. Louis that the great founders of the immoral satiric school flourished, who, like Richard de l'Île, Courtois d'Arras, Garin, Haisiaux, Huon le Roi, and Courte-Barbe, supplied, in subsequent times, Boccaccio, Villon, and Rabelais, with some of their worst passages. The Abbé Massieu says, "It is a surprising thing, that there should have never been in France more poets of gallantry, nay, more licentious and immoral poets, than during the reign of the holiest of our kings. Neither the example of the prince, nor the regulations of his kingdom against immorality and disorder, were able to restrain the poets within the bounds of their duty."† To a reflecting mind, on the contrary, nothing is less surprising than the phenomena to which he appeals. It is perfectly in the order of nature, that ages of eminent holiness should be prolific in writers of this description.

It was no novelty to the Christian Church to be presented with such facts. St. Jerome complained of his age, that frivolous authors were most read, and that many preferred the Milesian fables to the books of Plato.§

Yet on the other hand, if these books intended for the amusement of the feudal hall be compared with the compositions

* S. August. de Trin. XIV. 15.

† Duns Scoti, Lib. I. Sent. Dist. III. 9. 4.

‡ Hist. de la Poésie Française, 172.

§ S. Hieronymi Lib. I. Epist. 3, ad Eustachium.

which correspond to them in the ancient literature of the Gentiles, or in the modern society, no one, I think, will be tempted to bring them forward in evidence of a peculiar corruption of manners in the middle ages. We can trace no resemblance in them to the calumnious libels which were formerly denounced by human as well as by divine decrees—the Roman law condemning all who wrote or read them, and the Christian emperors publishing many ordinances to the same effect. Certainly many of the chivalrous romances contain objectionable passages, which appear the more dangerous, if we consider what S. Jerome saith, “*venena non dantur nisi melle circumlita, et vitia non decipiunt nisi sub specie umbraque virtutum.*” But yet they indicate no systematic plan to falsify the principles of human conduct, or to reverse the Christian type. They do not appear in the rank of an organized and determined opposition to the spirit and law of the Catholic religion. If the romantic writers contributed to create a taste for all that is wonderful and wild, it must on the other hand be acknowledged that theirs was often a most discreet madness; and, after all, the ancient sage who first reduced poetry to art, would not teach us, on that account, to despise them: τὸ δὲ θαυμαστὸν ἦδὲν, is the saying of Aristotle.* Speaking of Guillaume de Lorry and Jean de Mehun, Stephen Pasquier says, “Whether you consider their soft sentences, or their beautiful imagery, I would oppose them to all the Italian poets. Do you seek natural or moral philosophy? You find them there. Do you desire wise traits? Do you wish folly? You will find them both there in abundance—traits of folly from which you can learn to be wise. Not even in theology do they seem to be apprentices; and since their time, some have been in great vogue who were enriched with their plumes without confessing it.”† Pindar complains that “fables embellished with various false beauties, ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀλαθὴ λόγον, have perhaps deceived the minds of mortals, and poesy, which renders all things sweet to men, superinducing honour, may have often rendered credible what is incredible.”‡ But the moralist judges less severely, and with Novalis says that “it is the poet alone who deserves the name of sage.” Certainly the lay of the minstrel, or the romance of

the knightly penman, has often inspired heroism, devoted affection, and thoughts allied with justice, in youthful breasts. Call these authors, if you will, vain, but do not affect to be more severe than St. Jerome, who styles Homer “*dulcissime vanus.*” You cannot, at least, accuse them of heavy lightness, serious vanity, while of many you might truly affirm that they are pleasant without scurrility, audacious without impudence, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. What profound views of Providence and the mystery of life in that beautiful fabliaux of the hermit whom an angel leads through the world! What a moral lesson in the destruction of the boy, who, dying in innocence, is received among the angels, while his father returns to that course of charity from which he had been withdrawn by an over solicitude to make a provision for him; and thus both are eventually saved, whereas otherwise both would have been for ever lost! This admirable fable, which Parnel translated, and partially disfigured, to render it conformable to the prejudices of his sect, occurs in the Doctrinal de Sapience,* composed in the year 1388, by Gui de Roye, Archbishop of Sens. How easy is it again to detect the spirit of Catholicism in the tenderness and delicacy of the passage in the Inferno,

“That day we read no more;”

so universally admired, and yet to which many parallels might be found in the writings of the middle age, which were intended to amuse the leisure of the bower and hall. If all this be false, still we must grant that it is what Plato calls “lying well;” whereas the man of that new lay the inventor, which begins with

“I want a hero, an uncommon want,”

and generally the writers who have succeeded the ancient Catholic poets in that walk, by traducing the noble worthies of history, and levelling all views of human life, not merely lie, but lie οὐ καλῶς, as Plato says; publishing things, also, which if ever so true, the ancient moralists would have consigned to silence, or would have only discussed and examined in solemn conclave, before as few and as select hearers as possible.† “Never would we permit

* Poet. 24.

† Recherches de la France, liv. VII. 3.

‡ Olym. I.

* Doctrinale Sapientie.

† Plato de Repub. Lib. II.

poets," says Socrates, in a memorable passage, "to persuade our people that Achilles, being the son of a goddess, and of Peleus, the wisest of men, and the third from Jove, and educated by the most wise Chiron, was full of such confusion that he could have within himself two diseases contrary to each other *ἀνελυθηρίαν μετὰ φιλοχρηματίας. καὶ αὐτὴν ὑπερηφανίαν θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων*. We ought not to suffer them to say such things, nor try to persuade the young, *ὥς οἱ ἥρωες ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲν βελτίους, ἢ περ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἐμπροσθεν ἐλέγομεν, οὐδ' ὅσα ταῦτα οὐτ' ἀληθῆ*."* We have, in these remarkable words of Plato, an exact description of our modern popular literature, which is neither holy nor true. It was given, indeed, to Byron to draw fine tones from an anti-poetic chord in the human heart; but his imitators among a God-forsaken people have had reason to repent their choice in attempting to follow him. What made poets of old was faith, divine, infinite in its desires, in its sighs and raptures; human faith also, which believes in the affections of man, in hope, in hospitality, in patriotism—Christian faith, which purifies all, which sanctifies all, which defies all.

With respect to the censure due to the ancient romances of chivalry, it would be great injustice not to make many distinctions, and acknowledge the many extenuating features which belong to them. A modern writer of that class who speak of "the venerable chroniclers," of the middle ages, when they wish to show that they were men who had no sense of justice or mercy, says, that "while the heroes of the round table are sent in the most devout spirit to search for the Sangreal, we find them recreating themselves from their toils by the most depraved pleasures:" he neglects to inform his reader, in conclusion, that no knight can win the prize, but one who has the purity of an angel, and that one is found, Sir Perceval, who succeeds in the quest. But even without investigation, methinks had these ideal characters been exactly such as this writer represents, Dante, who knew them so well, when he had heard his sage instructor name those dames and knights of antique days, as being among the spirits for ever lost, would never have added, that "overpowered by pity, well nigh in amaze, his mind was lost."† In general these ancient books are judged from the paraphrases of modern

French writers like the Count of Caylus, and how they must have disfigured the old chivalrous romances may be well conceived, when one observes that in their versified translations of Theocritus they have contrived to obliterate, even in him, some expressions of the modesty of nature. Milton says that "the lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood, proved to him, by the price which they set upon chastity, so many incitements to the love and steadfast observation of that virtue."*

Would you observe what penitence, what a sense of the baseness of sin, occasionally breathes through these pages? Hear the following narrative:—"Courtesy resisted passion in the breast of Gyron le Courtois, as he rode with the Lady of Maloanc, saying to him within his mind, 'Haa, Gyron! Be not guilty of villainy, and think not to dishonour your friend; take heed how you deserve by your actions, the charge of treason, and of great villainy. For if you should act thus, you will never have honour more.' Nevertheless, he is about to succumb, till the falling of his sword into the fountain, causes him to hasten to the brink, when on stooping down to draw it out, his eyes are attracted by the words which were engraven on it: 'Loyaulté pass tout et fausseté honnit tout.' Gyron, who had often read them before, who had been often comforted by them in many adventures, and sorrows, now reads them, as if for the first time, as something new, which speaks to his soul. Immediately struck motionless with a deep sense of the crime he was about to commit, he continued to gaze in silence, and to meditate with a sorrowful countenance. The lady, surprised, came up and asked him what he was thinking of, with such earnestness. 'Of what do I think, lady? Alas! I am thinking how narrowly I have escaped from being for ever dishonoured; and I feel that I deserve to die for having harboured the thought within, of treason against my friend; and I am resolved to take vengeance upon myself. Ah! beautiful sword, thou wert once in the hands of a better knight, when thou wert wielded by thy great Hector le Brun, who on no day of his whole life, had ever a thought of treason; but I have thought treason, too foul and too villainous, against the most courteous man in the world;' and with these words, being overcome

* Plato de Repub. Lib. III.

+ Hell 5.

* An Apology for Smectymnus.

with an intolerable sense of his own wickedness, he would have plunged the sword into his side, and so rashly destroyed the sinner with the sin, had not the lady fallen upon him, and constrained his arm, till a knight came up, who took away the sword.*

Much, I am aware, remains to be said respecting the vices which desolated society during the ages of faith. Great and beyond all description were the calamities of the city of God, when those two luminaries and immortal columns of the Church, Dominick and Francis came into the world. As the historian of the Minors observes, "the demon having persecuted the infant Church, by tyrants, and the more advanced by heretics, endeavoured now to oppress with both the joyful and flourishing Church, afflicting it with horrors on all sides, perils of the sword without, heresies within, and the iniquity of corrupt manners."†

With what eyes this corruption was regarded by multitudes at the very time, may be seen in these wondrous annals of the poor; and that the minds of men were equally awake at the period of the subsequent revolution, may be learned in a striking manner, from the third sermon of Lewis of Granada, on the feast of St. Dominic, or from the discourse of John Francis Picus, of Mirandula, *De reformatis moribus*, which he pronounced before Leo the Tenth. "Wilt thou tolerate these monstrous things, O Leo, and wilt thou suffer them?" exclaims this virtuous prince. "Let those who do not observe the laws that are so well placed, feel the force of justice; for it is not by erecting Solomonian temples, or the Julian edifices of our age, that we can defeat the designs of our enemies; but by preserving the living temples of God, in sanctity and justice. There will be nothing to fear, if we only preserve the discipline of our faith, and that holiness of life, by which the world was formerly subdued. This every order, this the consent of all good men, demands and implores."

It is, however, in a future book, in contrast with the beatitude of peace, that we shall be more expressly required to survey the vices of the previous ages. For the present we may freely open our hearts to the gladsome, holy light, and endeavour to repair a deficiency which is to be deplored in most historic monuments, in which an entire order of facts, that, relating to the fulfilment of justice, is excluded to make room for details not in the least more cer-

tain, but only perhaps more in accordance with the secret desires of human vanity.

How few have heard of the Count and Countess of Gondi, the benefactors of St. Vincent de Paul, who died the death of the just, after having walked before God all their days, in sanctity! But to what region of the world has not the fame of their unhappy son extended, in consequence of his errors, or his crimes?

Great and glorious deeds were wrought by just men among our ancestors, says Benedict Aretino, though historians, to record them, were wanting. If one man, Leonardo Aretino, had not written those books on the Acts of the Florentines, the virtues of Huguccio Fagiolini, Rufus Castucci, Guido of Arezzo, King Robert, Mastino, Archbishop of Milan, Count Alberic, Galeazzo of Mantua, Peter Farnese, and Galeazzo Malatesta, would have perished from the human memory. Judge, then, how many just, holy, and innocent men must have flourished during these ages, of whom we know nothing.*

Who can estimate the multitude of the golden angelic souls, candid, puerile, and at the same time profound, to which the middle ages gave birth, and which passed without observation, or leaving behind in history any vestige or memorial of their transit? It was enough for the just that their death was precious in the sight of God, and that their lot was amongst the saints.

Beautiful and terrible was then the Church, as at all times, according to the wisest poet; beautiful in the splendour of the saints, terrible in the armour of the strong, beautiful in that golden vestment, composed of the variety of the just, terrible in the hand of the mighty ones of Israel; but where is the intelligence that can know, or the tongue that can enumerate the virtues of the holy men who pacifically flourished in the city of God, or who bravely militated in its defence? Only in visions of mysterious joy that did im-paradise the soul, have a few men been vouchsafed a momentary glance at the mighty hosts, which in the final judgment we shall see. "Behold!" cried a voice to one thus favoured, "this fair assemblage; stoles of snowy white, how numberless! The city where we dwell, behold! how vast; and these our seats so thronged; few now are wanting here."

* Gyron le Courtois, F. XLVII.

† Wadding apparat. ad Annales Minorum.

* De præstantia virorum sui ævi Dialog. Antiqu. Italie IX.

CHAPTER II.



HAT was the state of the public mind and manners generally, during the middle ages, in relation to justice, or conformity to the Divine law? This is the first question, which cannot be reasonably answered, until we have consulted the contemporaneous writers. But ere we proceed to interrogate them, let us recur to the reflection with which we closed the last chapter, in order that we may have a clear view of the position in which we stand towards the solution of the present problem.

I have said that the annals of nations, and the other monuments of antiquity, transmit the knowledge of only a very small part of the just and sublime souls that have passed upon the earth; and, we may add, that, divided as the world is between those whom error and crime have seduced, the two societies of earth and heaven are in wondrous sort confused and blended together. "We know not," as St. Augustin says, "the number of the just or of the sons of the Church, that holy mother which may appear sterile upon earth. The number of her happy children is known only to Him who calls the things that are not as those that are."*

We are not favoured like him, to whom it was said by truth itself, "I will make all my good before thee pass." If we would not prove traitors in regard to history, this is one of the occasions on which we must be content to believe more than we can see; for, to behold the multitudinous graces which descended upon human minds, through the long lapse of ages which we are reviewing; is a privilege reserved for spirits far otherwise exalted and happy, than any which are still encompassed with the darksome weeds of flesh. It would be a vision of the similitude of divine glory, such as will be on that day when the hearts of Christians shall be revealed, and when the deeds of the right hand that were to be left unknown shall be to the universe proclaimed. Nevertheless, while reason teaches the necessity of waiting for the future revelation of the double

mystery of virtue and of crime, it is already possible, in this life, to compare Christian and Catholic manners with those of the ancient world and of the modern society, and to trace the development of that ineffable power which has so richly fructified God's vineyard.*

In forming a judgment on such a question, I am aware that there is an almost infinite variety in the evidence that might be produced to suit the difference of minds; for each observer, according to his studies and habits of thought, will be disposed to attach a greater importance to some one or other of the numerous proofs which may be produced from the history and literature of the ages in review. In general, nothing will be more calculated to win attention and assent than incidental testimonies, with which assuredly no one need be scantily provided, for the only difficulty can be in choosing them out of the mass of evidence which presents itself to the recollection of every one who is conversant with the ancient Christian writings.

I said also that, during the middle ages, the crimes of the unjust were often brought forward for the instruction of men; and every one knows that the statements of holy priests and abbots have been converted by modern writers into formal testimonies, to prove the corruption of past times. Whether these great moralists of the middle ages did not sometimes indulge in rhetorical licence in such pictures, might be a very natural question. The English writers, moreover, of that epoch, seem to have been peculiarly inclined to censure, and to a spirit of bitter criticism, from which not even such great and worthy men as John of Salisbury were sufficiently exempt. It may be observed also, that the most deplorable pictures of the general depravity, such as we find in the prologue to the Customs of Cluni, and in the first book of the Annals of the Camaldolese, were given as a kind of introduction to the history of some eminent servants of God, the authors of some wondrous and extensive reformation, or

* St. August. Enchirid. cap. 9.

* Ezech. 2.

even to serve as a foil to the most eminent virtues existing at the same time, which were so great, as to draw forth that exclamation of an ancient writer: "O golden age of Rounald, which, although it knew not the torments of persecutors, yet wanted not a spontaneous martyrdom! O golden age, which amidst the deserts of mountains and woods, nourished so many citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem."* But whatever may be thought of these remarks, the most cautious reader must, at all events, admit that it will be allowable to meet arguments founded upon such statements of ancient writers, with the evidence of these writers themselves, from whose parenthetical and other incidental modes of expression one can often collect the most satisfactory of all kinds of testimony, in proof of the eminent piety and justice of the contemporary generation. Such I conceive to be that remark of St. Augustin, that "rarely was any one found in his time, to blaspheme Christ with his tongue." Such that testimony of St. Gregory Nazianzen, "that a man of pleasure, addicted to licentious habits, was then the object of public scorn and hatred,"† which seems repeated by the Norman historians, who speak of the disdain with which so many knights refused to acknowledge William, on account of the illegitimacy of his birth; William of Jumiègue expressly recording that on that account he was an object of contempt with the indigenous nobles.‡ Such that remarkable distinction of Thomas à Kempis, "Et omnes, ni fallor, homines cupiunt esse cum Christo, et ad populum ejus pertinere; sed pauci volunt sequi vitam Christi."§ Such that complaint of Richard of St. Victor, "How many do we see in our days poor in spirit, rejoicing in hope, fervent in charity, abstaining much, and greatly patient; who are nevertheless too tepid in respect of the zeal of souls? Some, as if through humility, not presuming to reprove delinquents; others, lest they should seem to disturb fraternal charity, fearing to remonstrate with sinners."||

From a few such passages as these, the least attentive reader, methinks, can form some idea of the justice and spiritual elevation to which the manners of the middle ages had attained. What philosophic writer could now support his arguments by appealing to the public voice to confirm such

assertions as that it would be difficult to find any one who blasphemed Christ; that general scorn and hatred followed a breach of the Christian law; that all men probably wish to be with Christ, and to be of the number of his people; that the multitude is great who practise the precepts of perfection, and who err only through humility and the love of peace? Yet, with a certain allowance made, this could be done at so late a period as the fifteenth century; for that devout philosopher, Marsilius Ficinus, declares that he cannot bring any other accusation against his age, but that of having produced one impious man, the brother of his friend Oricellario, "who vomits blasphemies against God, from the same mouth that was made to proclaim his praise."

To complain idly of the present time, by comparing it with the past, had always been a favourite exercise of moralists.

"Utinam veteres mores, veteres parcimonie
Potius majori honori hic essent quam mores
mali!
Nam nunc mores nihil faciunt: quod licet nisi
quod lubet?"

Such is the complaint in Plautus; but it may be remarked that, during the ages of faith, this propensity of human nature has generally left much less trace of its indulgence, so that this is the only point in which the men of the middle ages resembled the modern race of Gallic land; in all other respects heeding little the present, but in their comparative views of justice, seeming to be without a past, or, in relation to the present earth, a future; and, in fact, they had heard the Church declare in her solemnities, that what the saints of old did not doubt would be, she knew had already been in great measure fulfilled. "It is a vicious propensity of some men," says Guibert de Nogent, writing in the eleventh century, "to vituperate the deeds of the moderns, and magnify past ages. It was right, indeed, to praise the felicity of the ancients, and their vivacity moderated by prudence; but in the estimation of no discreet person, is their secular prosperity in any manner to be preferred to our virtue; for, although a certain merit shone eminently in them, yet in us, upon whom the ends of the world are come, the gift of nature hath not grown torpid. The deeds that were wrought in ancient times, may, indeed, be proclaimed justly for the recreation of men, but much more worthy of being published are those things which are usefully performed by the rude in this old age of the

* Annal. Camaldul. Lib. X. + Cont. Fornic. 3.

† Hist. Norm. Lib. VII. c. 3. § Epistolæ I.

|| De præparatione animi ad contemplationem, cap. 41.

world. If we have heard that God was magnified in the Judaic people, we have known by sure experience that Jesus Christ as yesterday with the ancients, so to-day with the moderns is glorified.*

Again, what is still more curious, hear what Wandalbert Deacon, a monk of Prüm, speaking in the ninth century, and saying, in the prologue to his life of St. Goar, addressed to the Abbot Marcuard, "Now that studies after many years of prostration in Gall, have been made to flourish again by the liberality of princes, and the wisdom of good men, we should be inexcusable if we did not transmit to posterity the acts of the holy persons which have come to our knowledge. Neither are they to be heard, who ascribe so much to past times, as to deny that any deeds performed at present are worthy of record; for Divine Providence grants to all ages of the world what is fit for the human race in mode and measure, so that it is not right for us to desire the felicity of former men, nor is it credible that if they could have foreseen the state of our times, they would have condemned it; for there are now also in the Church many men of illustrious virtue."†

Will you descend to later times? "This city of Lyons," says Paravin, "although it contains a medley of all nations, can justly claim the title of 'a house of religion,' a 'congregation of brothers,' for there reigns within it a virtue and a union which can only proceed from the grace of God."‡

The celebrated Traversari, that holy and learned Ambrose from the Desert of Camaldoli, coming to Bologna in the year 1434, found it a prey to civil dissensions; yet, while lamenting these troubles, which he endeavoured to appease, he hesitated not to say, in a letter to Albert, "Bologna hath men to whom, besides the graces of all humanity, is not wanting the fear of God, and the most profound reverence for religion; so that without regard to the many monasteries of our order which it contains, necessity urges me to love and cherish that city, and to take delight in it."§

In the epitaph of the blessed Guido, in the convent of Minors at Bologna, which is of the fourteenth century, that city is styled *Civitas sensata*, to express its celebrated learning, which gave rise to the saying, "Bononia docet." Maffæus Veggius ascribes the success of St. Bernardine's preaching at Milan, partly

to the character of the inhabitants, whom he describes as a most humane people, most addicted to the divine worship, of a sweet and gentle nature, offensive to none, envious of none, always desirous of good, and living together in singular benevolence and charity, seeking rather to augment than diminish the honour of strangers; without deceit, without affectation, and after sinning not with difficulty brought to penitence.* Muratori calls Milan "that beloved city, where still the manners of the golden age may be seen to flourish."† The holy and learned Sigebert, in the twelfth century, had contracted such an affection and respect for the citizens of Metz, during his residence among them, that he inserted an elaborate panegyric on their city, into his history of Thierry, one of their bishops.‡ St. Bonaventura went farther than to praise one city. He used to return thanks to God for having sent him into the world in an age when he could hold converse with the holy men that were then living in the order of Minors.§ "If any age can be called golden," says that religious philosopher Marsilius Ficinus, in his letter to Paul, the physician and astronomer of Middelburg, "unquestionably it is that which produces in greatest number the men of golden souls, whom Plato speaks of; and that such is our age, no one can entertain a doubt, who will examine it with attention."||

With respect to the moral character of the labouring poor in the middle ages, there are many incidental fragments from which, I conceive, we should be justified in forming a favourable estimate. Such is that passage in the dialogue ascribed to St. Auselm, where, after the condition of soldiers and of artisans is shown to be full of peril to the soul, the question is proposed, What say you of husbandmen? which is thus answered by the master, "The majority of them are saved; because they live with simplicity, and feed the people of God with the labour of their hands, and, therefore, are they blessed."¶ You have, in many places, proof of the rustic population being profoundly imbued with a religious spirit, and, consequently, we must infer that the general tenor of its conduct was just and fair. "A circumstance happened in my youth," says St. Gregory of Tours, "which shows with

* Wadd. an. Min. X.

† In Script. rer. Italic. Præfat.

‡ Hist. Lit. de la Franc. vol. IX.

§ Wadding Annal. tom. IV. an. 1262.

|| Marsil. Ficini Epist. Lib. X.

¶ S. Anselmi Elucidarii, Lib. II. cap. 18.

* Guibert de Novigent. Gesta Dei per Francos.

† Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Benedict. tom. 2.

‡ Paravin Hist. de Lyon, Lib. III. c. 18.

§ Annales Camaldulens. Lib. LXII.

what reverence and advantage men received bread that had been blessed by the hands of a holy priest. A certain priest going on a solitary journey, came in the evening to the auspice of a poor man, who received and lodged him. During the night, the priest rose as usual to say his office, and the man, whom necessity obliged to go into the forest to carry wood, rose very early. According to the custom of rustics, before it was light, he desired his wife to give him some food, which she brought to him; but the man having received it, would not eat it before it had been blessed by the priest, or until he had received eulogies from him."*

Stephen Pasquier makes an observation which, in the same manner, proves the religious spirit of the age in which he wrote. "There is no more effectual way," he says, "to make a prince lose the hearts of his people, and deprive him of strength, than by excommunication, seeing that the principal power of every king lies in the devotion and love of his subjects."† The force of such a passage can be estimated, when we observe its comparative inapplicability to the manners of men in subsequent times.

There is something, again, very striking as incidental evidence, in the plan of history pursued by Alfonso, of Carthagera, with regard to the kings of Spain, who, in relating how each is represented in painting, presents the most striking features of his character in a conspicuous and picturesque manner. Thus Wamba, he says, is painted armed, but wearing a monk's cowl; another is painted in a pacific vest, though most warlike, because he never warred against the infidels. Alfonso the astrologer, is painted in a long pacific robe, holding a book in his hand, after the manner of learned men. The attachment of those kings to holy priests, is indicated in this manner: King Athanagildus is painted in a pacific garb, having at his side St. Martin, who preached in Gaul, and St. Æmilian. King Leovigildus is painted also in a long pacific habit, and near him stand Leander and Isidore, Spanish archbishops. Suintila the Second, king of the Goths, is painted in a pacific vest, in company with St. Eugenius, archbishop of Toledo. Recensuindus is painted in company with St. Ildefonsus. Hermigius is painted in a pacific robe, with the Archbishop Julian Pomerius at his side, a man

of renowned life and learning. Veremundus the Second, is painted leaning on a staff, having at his side the Archbishop of Compostello, and another prelate. Ferdinand the First is painted in armour, on horseback, St. James delivering to him the keys of the city of Coimbra, and St. Dominus de Scillos at his side. Alphonso the Seventh is painted seated on his throne, wearing an imperial diadem, having at his side St. Adelelm. Alphonso the Eighth is painted armed, on horseback, and near him stand Constantia, abbess of Huelgas, which convent he founded, and St. Dominic, the father of preachers.* Certainly there is a great distance between this humble mode of writing, so characteristic of the middle ages, and what is called the philosophic majesty of Tacitus. But, on the other hand, who does not perceive that it has a certain kind of merit; for who does not feel that it supplies most decisive evidence as to the predominant character of these men; and if a similar mode of historic representation were adapted in reference to the race of kings who embraced the modern philosophy, and preferred it to the Catholic faith, who would not trust its fidelity? I do not inquire how one ought to paint these princes, or what persons should be placed at their side, certainly it would not be learned abbots and saintly bishops. I do not propose a question, which no one would be, for a moment, at a loss to answer; but I ask, who would not recognise the portrait at the first view, and, however ridiculous might be the association of images, who could doubt their accuracy?

Again, from the general tone of literature, and especially from that of dramatic representations, similar conclusions may be drawn respecting the character of the age to which they belonged. In a former book, we observed the religious tone which distinguished the learning of the middle ages. Here we might appeal to the heroic and noble images of virtue which abound in their popular poems and legends. A French traveller has lately remarked, that the Spaniards, in their ancient comedies, had captivating examples of all the virtues that can be recommended to a people,—loyalty, firmness, justice, and above all, mercy and goodness; so that one could hardly witness them, without feeling a stronger disposition to practise these vir-

* De Gloria Confessorum, c. 31.

† Recherches de la Franc. III. 19.

* Alfons. a Carthagera Reg. Hisp. Anacephalæsis.

tues.* It was the early heresies, as I shall have occasion to show, which infused a contrary spirit into the dramatic pieces of England.

If we proceed to examine the course of historical events, we have evidence of another kind equally satisfactory.

When we find the French nation so indignant at the voluptuous life of Childeric, that merely on that account they drove him from his throne, and gave it to another king, and did not permit him to return till after eight years of exile, when in the year 464 they became appeased—when we find Judicael, the king of Brittany, choosing not to dine at the table of the king of France, for the reason specified by St. Paul, and in order to avoid it going to dine with the chancellor, St. Ouen, at whose table we read holy lessons†—when we read of a St. Adalhard in the IXth century, a youth in the palace of the Emperor Lewis, and that when through hatred of King Desiderius, the emperor put away his lawful wife, the daughter of that king, and married another, this young Adalhard, though only a boy, felt such a detestation of that act, that he left the palace, and renounced all the brilliant prospects with which the world presented him,‡ we are led of necessity to believe that amidst the society of those times there was a living sense of virtue, a respect for justice, and an infinite fear of transgressing the Divine law. In general, I must repeat it, the views taken by modern historical writers respecting the manners of the middle ages, are certainly calculated to excite the astonishment of those who have made an exact and conscientious study of that interval. It would be well for historians if they were placed in the circumstances of Homer, who never speaks of the barbarians, for the reason, as Thucydides suggests, “that there was, in his time, no common name to oppose to them; for he does not speak of Greeks under one name, but only talks of Argives, and Achæans, and others.”§ The age of Louis XIV., or the age of the pseudo reformation, were with many writers found epochs of great convenience, to which all other periods of the Church were contrasted as barbarous.

A Catholic historian, than whom no one ever evinced a greater thirst for truth and

justice, says that “there never were manners more opposed to those of the primitive church than those which reigned during the tenth century.” Observe, however, that even while drawing a most dark picture of ignorance and barbarism, for the purpose of representing these times, he formally admits that the primitive discipline of the church continued to subsist till the beginning of the tenth century, and that there never were ages of greater piety and fervour; that the most holy and zealous men succeeded in continued order, and that even during the worst time the faith was always pure, the great principles of morality firmly established, and the tradition, not only of sound doctrine, but of manners, preserved. These sentences are contradictory. The latter are incontrovertible; for we have in our hands the writings and the memorials of the tenth century, which prove that no such prodigious and sudden change had taken place. The latter therefore must be submitted to a long interpretation, to free them from the error which arose no doubt in a great measure from the influence of a certain school to which that illustrious historian had been attached, and partly perhaps from that fondness for antithesis, and of systematic divisions, which so often leads the best writers of his country into exaggeration. Chateaubriand says, “if you wish to see the horrors of those ages, read the Councils.”* True: but he would himself be the first to add, if you wish to see their virtue and their justice, read the Councils. It is there you observe with what solicitude provision was made that, as the Church prays, the people of God might avoid diabolic contagion.† Nothing can be more injurious again to history than that Pirronism and spirit of singularity to which so many of the modern writers abandoned themselves. “I will say, also,” adds Lenglet Du Fresnoy, “that too many reflections produce no less uncertainty in history than too few, as is seen in Varillas, who carried away by the beauty of some deep speculations respecting the death of the Prince of Castille, passes over in silence the real circumstances which he had before his eyes in the letters of Peter Martyr, in order to indulge his imagination with these subtle and groundless reflections.”‡ It is an acute remark of Car-

* Bourgoign, *Tableau de l'Espagne*, II. 403.

† Lobineau *Hist. de Bret.* I.

‡ Vita. S. Adalhardi Mabill. acta S. Ordinis Bened. Sec. IV. 1.

§ Thucyd. Lib. I. cap. 3.

* *Discours Hist.* tom. III. 420.

† *Sund.* XVII. after Pentecost.

‡ *L'histoire justifiée contre les Romains.*

dan ; "ne credas omnes homines tam calidos esse, ut tu es ;"* and Lord Bacon makes the same ; "Certainly," saith he, "it is an error frequent for men to shoot over, and to suppose deeper ends, and more compass-reaches than are." Moreover, there is a confusion of epochs in the mind of modern writers, who desire to show their knowledge of French history, by speaking of the manners of the ancient "Regime," as if those had been the manners of the middle age, and as if it was the system of the middle ages, which the revolution of the last century overthrew. But the antiquity of this state, dates only from the rise of the modern philosophy, which by diminishing the influence of faith, had led to the secularization, and to the demoralization of society. For when supernatural motives and manners had been banished from life, as relics of a false religion, and of dark ages, there could be nothing reaped but the fruits of a licentious naturalism.

There is again another kind of evidence of which we must take advantage, arising from the numerous institutions which existed in the middle ages, spreading deep and wide roots through the whole social state, and which, like the confraternities of laics, were especially directed to preserve the public morals from whatever could occasion scandal.† These, as the Church sings, were the true fraternities which overcame the crimes of the world ; and followed Christ, possessing the noble kingdom of heaven.

In Spain the number of communicants in any city, used to be considered, till lately, as the certain basis for calculating its population.‡ This was the fruit which these associations produced every where.

The Florentines laid the axe at the root, when they established those societies of lay boys, composed of the noble, middle, and poor classes, which Ambrose of Camaldoli describes in his letter to Pope Eugene. Over each of these divisions, a faithful laic was appointed ; a grave religious man, who trained up these pupils in a secular habit, for the service of the Eternal King. "Their manners," says Traversari, "were preserved in innocence ; they were taught to avoid vain spectacles and plays ; to abstain from light words, to go often to confession and communion, and to exercise their talents in whatever manner their

parents might wish. On Sundays and festivals they all assembled in one place, to celebrate the praise of God, and to have recreations of salutary colloquies. After the age of boyhood, they entered, a superior class for youths ; and again a third was ready to receive them, so that they were trained to justice through all the critical stages of their lives."*

Dante puts the description of the ancient purity of Florence in the mouth of one of the blessed spirits. Truly, the manners of our enlightened cities at present, would be strange matter for an angel's tongue : but what would it be to behold and converse with these first Florentines, whose renown time covers ? To see the Ughi, Catilini, Filippi, the Alberichi, Greci, and Ormanni — illustrious citizens, whose origin was a theme for the discourse of a celestial man from the desert, Ambrosius of Camaldoli.†

It is clear also, that the different orders of chivalry contributed, by the internal regulations which they maintained, to preserve or revive the manners of the Catholic faith. With what zeal and solicitude the morals of the Teutonic knights in Prussia, were defended from contaminations, may be seen in all works relating their history. Winrich von Kniprode sent visitors to examine whether there was any thing to be found contrary to the honourable and holy life. They were first to admonish them with brotherly love, and then, if that failed, to punish with the strictest impartiality. This virtuous discipline produced the happiest effects upon the citizens also of the different states of Prussia. Wigand says, that soldiers and citizens were all alike maintained in virtuous order, by the example and care of Winrich von Kniprode. "Tenuit milites atque clientes in justitia per suam prudentiam, cives et rusticos, laudabiliter gubernando, viduis et orphanis compaciendo."‡

It was ordained by Winrich von Kniprode, in 1352, that in every house of the order which contained as many as twelve knights, there should be two very learned men to instruct and retain them in religion and justice.§ In 1382, visitors were again sent throughout Prussia, to examine whether any one belonging to the order was ignorant of the usual prayers of Christians ; and if any such were found, they were to be punished.||

* Prudentia civilis, cap. 62.

† Italia Sacra, tom. IV. 522.

‡ Bourgoign, Tableau del'Espagne, vol. III. 171.

* Annal. Camaldulens. Lib. LXII.

† De originibus Florentinorum civium.

‡ Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V. 401.

§ Id. V. 100.

|| V. 390.

Again, the ancient writers themselves form another class of witnesses to prove the virtue and justice of the middle ages. What a multitude of just men then succeeded in constant order, by whose converse cheered, the people journeyed on and felt no toil! Their works, it is true, are all but baggage out of date now—books that were written by men of honour, for others like themselves; but the dispersed fragments of these old writers, which we occasionally meet with in the compositions of modern literature, impress us instantly with the idea that we should revere and kiss them, as if the bones and relics of holy men. "It is not said," observes Pasquier, beginning to speak of Alain Chartier, "that I have to present you only with the memorable facts which have passed in France. Words and golden sentences of certain men are of no less value;"* and he might have added justly, that in an historical point of view, they merit no less attention.

Finally, from a reference to their legislation, and the principles of government universally received, we derive further evidence of the public sense of justice, which pervaded society during the middle ages.

Joseph Scaliger quotes an ancient saying; "Ex malis moribus bonas leges." Unquestionably, in respect to the minute regulation of actions, the legislation of the middle ages appears defective, in comparison with our own. But it is easy to account for this. The confessional superseded the criminal law. Moreover the law had not then supreme dignity. The law did not give authority to Churches. "Lex imperatorum non est supra legem Dei sed subter," say the Decretals;† therefore all interests, purely national, were subordinate to something higher. "Take away justice," says St. Augustin, "and what are kingdoms but great dens of robbers?"‡

Bayard used to say, we are told by the old writers of his life, that all empires, kingdoms, and provinces, without justice, are forests full of brigands. In days of chivalry, therefore, valour, and the most successful deed of arms, was no excuse for an injustice committed against a weaker state. There were not then warriors received into the society of honourable men,

to whom the Shakspearian admonition would be applicable: "Tell him that his sword can never win the honour that he loses."

No change in the administration of a kingdom during the middle ages, could have rendered it a nest of pirates, in regard to another country, with which it was professedly at peace.

In vain will you search the history of the middle ages, to discover a precedent for the system of intimidation adopted lately by combined states, trusting solely in their superior force, to awe the heroic champions of a just cause by insolent messages in the worst style of Roman oppression.

Before the rise of the new opinions in religion, which broke up the ancient and compact state of Christendom, nations, as well as individuals, had confidence in justice and law; and the most powerful would have shrunk from declaring openly that they held power by the sword. "That is the worst title of all," says a writer who saw and deplored the revolution which was taking place in the minds of men, "and fitter for those hords of Tartarians than for a commonwealth of Christians. Neither Littleton nor Somme rural, nor jus feudale know any such tenure, whatever may be concluded from the aphorisms of Holland, and the divinity of La Rochelle."* "Violentia perpetuitatem nescit," says Giles of Colonna, in the thirteenth century; "therefore if a king rules by force, his dominion will be short, and the happiness of a king is not to be placed in any thing transitory, but in what is eternal; and besides, men who would govern by civil power, are unjust, and not worthy of being kings."† "God chose to die for sin," says Richard of St. Victor; "in our deliverance God would rather use justice than power; because the devil is a lover of power, a deserter of justice; and in this respect men imitate him, who affect power, and hate justice.‡ Can we trace the operation of these sentiments in the history of the middle ages? Assuredly we can. The contemporary writers who eulogize William the Conqueror, are careful to assure their readers upon what grounds they do so. "We deem it important," says William of Poitiers, who had been himself a warrior, "to say with the strictest truth, that if William, whose glory we record, which will

* Recherches de la France, VI. 16.

† Ivon. Carnot. Decret. Pars IV. c. 86.

‡ De Civitate Dei, Lib. IV. 4.

* Jerusalem and Babel, 294.

† Id. II. 1. de regimine principum I. 1. 9.

‡ Sermo in die Paschæ.

displease, we hope, none, but prove agreeable to all men both present and future, took possession by force of arms of the principality of Mans as well as of the kingdom of England, it was that he was bound to do so according to the laws of justice."* On the other hand, Oderic Vitalis attests that many nobles followed the example of Gilbert, surnamed the Avoire of St. Valeri, cousin of the Duke of Normandy, to whom he was always faithful, and who was present with him in all his battles in the English war, and who, when the kingdom was pacified, and William established on the throne, in spite of the offer which this prince made him of great possessions in his new estates, returned to Neustria, and refused to participate in any degree in the plunder beyond sea; "Content with his own wealth," says the historian, "he rejected that of others, and devoutly offered his son, Hugues, to the ecclesiastical discipline in the monastery of Riche."†

The rights of men among Catholic nations were not as a convention of their diplomacy, but as a necessity of their faith; having for guarantee and for rule, not the balance of power, or the text of protocols, or the will of tyrants, or the caprice of ministers, or the vote of a parliament, but the prescript of justice, the voice of the Holy See, and, as it were, the conscience of mankind. When Henry II. in writing to Louis VII. of France, styled St. Thomas "the late archbishop," that king exclaimed immediately, "and who has deposed him? I who am also a king, cannot depose in my states the least of clerks." In those days, the experience of the old humanity was still verified, and as Hesiod remarked, "the cause of justice, as far as it was under the influence of human agency, was sure to prevail in the end."

— δίκη δ' ὑπὲρ ὕβριος ἴσχει,
εἰς τέλος ἐξελθοῦσα.‡

"Who is just," asks Æschylus, ἀνάγκας ἄρεπ; "without necessity?"§ You have here the sad but true estimate of all ancient governments, prior to the creation of that common, international and domestic law, which the Catholic religion introduced, and which, in later times, has been supplanted by the artificial contrivances of political sophists, who recognised no other principles but expediency and force. In-

stead of the deep foundation of justice which lay at the bottom of the German empire; in the middle ages, Europe has adopted the new principle emanating from the doctrines of the innovators, of the balance of powers; a sufficient indication of what they deem trustworthy.

Some modern historians have acknowledged the extraordinary character of justice belonging to the ancient governments. "Without doubt," says Michelet, "St. Louis owed that elevation of mind which places equity above law, in a great measure to the Franciscans and Dominicans with whom he was surrounded."* King Ferdinand, at his death, appointing Ximenes regent of Spain, assigned as his motive for doing so, the integrity of the man, and the bent of his mind, which was always desiring what was right and just.† We find this character expressly noted on many ecclesiastical tombs of the middle age. Hugo in the twelfth century Abbot of Pontigny, and afterwards Bishop of Auxerre, lies buried in that abbey, with these verses over him.

"Hunc à justitiæ norma revocare nequibant
Obsequium, terror, gratia, dona, preces.
Sola triumphabat virtus pietatis in illo
Cum post justitiam debuit esse pius."‡

Wherever we trace the spirit of the clergy in the ancient legislations, we find them characterized by this spirit of incorruptible justice, bending only to the charity of the Gospel. Open the code of the Visigoths of Spain. There we read, that laws are not to be enacted for any private advantage but for the utility of all the citizens;§ that law is a rival of the Divinity, a priest of religion, a nurse of justice, and the soul of the whole popular body:|| that the law must be the same for all, for citizens and peasants, that it must be according to nature, according to the custom of the state, according to place and time, prescribing useful and necessary things;¶ that all will be better men, and more strongly defended by equity than by arms; that justice should advance first to meet an enemy before the soldier brandishes a javelin.** You find the same notions prevailing in the thirteenth century. "All human laws," says Giles of Colonna, "should be conformable to natural law, to

* Hist. de France, II. 612.

† Wadd. Ann. Minorum, tom. XVI.

‡ Buleus Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. II.

§ Legis Wisigothorum, Lib. I. 3.

|| Id. Lib. tit. II. 2. ¶ Lib. I. tit. II. 4.

** Lib. I. tit. II. 6.

* Vita Guliel. + Hist. Normand. Lib. VI.

† Hesiod. Op. et Dies.

§ Eumenid. 550.

the common good, and to the particular nations to whom they are applied; they must be just, useful, and congenial to the customs of the country, and to the time." In the government of every state must be considered the prince, the council, the magistracy, and the people.* Here is justice, and no exaggeration, as in the language of the modern sophists, who speak as if there were nothing in a state but the people.

Would you behold these principles in action? Witness the happy state of Ravenna under the sway of Venice, after the rival families of Traversari and Polenta had been subdued. "Happy city!" cries an old historian, "than which no state was ever governed with more clemency, or with a more equal dispensation of justice."† The confessor of Queen Marguerite, wife of St. Louis, relates, in his life of that holy king, that "one day having stopped at Vitry, he went into the cemetery of the parish church, to hear the sermon of brother Lambert, of the order of the preaching friars, and that he sat down at his feet; and that a noise occurring in a neighbouring tavern, he made them cease, and inquired to whom the jurisdiction of the place belonged, not wishing to order any thing against the authors of this noise unless with the ordinary formalities." The king of the middle ages was thus subject, like the least of the people, to the ordinary magistrate. The severity of Rollo, under whose administration golden bracelets could be suspended from the trees in the forests near Rouen, for three years, without being touched by any one, is ascribed by William of Jumièges, not to his desire of displaying power, but to his love for justice, which is taught by the Divine law.‡ The results in similar instances were certainly not a little remarkable. The continuator of William of Jumièges says, that "Richard of Normandy, styled the father of his country, and particularly of monks, maintained such justice, that labourers used to leave their instruments in the fields without fear of losing them; that if any thing were ever stolen, the count would pay the loser out of his own purse;" and another historian relates that "Gaufrey, the illustrious Count of Poitiers, maintained such an exact dispensation of justice, that during all his time, no traveller or rustic labourer

in the kingdom of Aquitaine was ever disturbed; so that these times," he adds, "might justly be compared to the happiest age of former Christian princes."* The abbot Alexander says, that "the dangers from robbers to which travellers were exposed in the provinces of Salerno and Amalphi, before the coming of Roger from Sicily, was owing to there having been no government since the death of duke William who left no legitimate heir. So wise and effective was the succeeding administration under king Roger, that through all parts of his dominions every kind of iniquity was extirpated, and nothing was followed but what had relation to justice and peace, so that the words of the Psalmist seemed fulfilled, 'Justitia et pax osculata sunt.'"†

The historians of Genoa, commemorating the justice and continence of Matthew Maruffus, who commanded the fleet of that republic, relate that "wherever he was sent to govern, he contrived to impart his own manners to the people, so that the cities committed to him seemed no longer like cities, but like religious communities, full of sanctity. Precious objects might be left on the pavement during the night, and would be touched by no one that passed."‡ Bracellio ascribes the grandeur and wealth of Pera and Capha, which had originated in a few miserable cottages, to the admirable administration of the Genoese government, and to the holy and innocent lives of their rulers. Simon Vignosus, general of that republic, having conquered the island of Chio, during the siege of the city issued a decree declaring that, "if any soldier were found trespassing in the vineyards he should be beaten publicly with rods." Shortly after, some husbandmen caught his own son Francis, a youth, in their enclosures, and without knowing who he was, brought him to his father, whom no prayers could induce to swerve from his decree; so that his son incurred the penalty, and was scourged, having bunches of grapes tied round his neck. When this just man was dying, he bequeathed five hundred pieces of gold to be distributed among the poor maidens of Chio, to serve for their marriage portions, hoping thus to make amends for the misery which the husbandmen had suffered during the war.§

* Fragment. historię Monast. Pictarensis apud Martène Thesaur. Anecd. tom. III.

† Alex. Abb. de Rebus gest. Rogerii, Lib. IV. c. 4

‡ Uberti Folietis clarorum Ligurum elogia Thesaur. antiq. Italię, I.

§ Jacob. Bracellius de claris Genuensibus.

* De Regim. Princip. Lib. III. p. 11. c. 16. 26.

† Desid. Spreti de origine Urbis Raven. Lib. I.

‡ Hist. des Normand. Lib. II. cap. 20.

The ideal of kingly power is admirably expressed in many of the inscriptions and monuments of the middle ages : as where the justice of Charles, Duke of Calabria, eldest son of Robert, King of Sicily, whose tomb is in the convent of the Poor Clares at Naples, is represented by the figures of a lamb and a wolf drinking together out of a shell placed beneath his image.* Nothing could better represent the power by which the houses of the religious orders were preserved so long.

During the middle ages, laws were not multiplied as they have been subsequently under the dominion of governments styled popular and constitutional. The ancient poet pronounced those times happy under kings and tribunes, which beheld Rome content with one prison.† What would he have thought of later ages, and under the new forms of administration, when the number and excellence of its prisons forms a country's pride? "I wish," says Heinsius, "that not only our manners, but our laws, of which we have now neither law nor measure, could be brought back to former times. Believe me, it would be easier to live under twelve than under an infinite number of laws."‡ What need of a Fannian law when manners were simple? who desired a Cæcilian when there was the same cultivation in the country as in the city? who a Julian, when the love of money was not predominant? who a Falcidian, when virtue and honour were considered the best inheritance? who a Scantinian, when men lived chastely, and in the bonds of wedded love? who a Memmian, when detraction and calumny were in horror? The laws of the middle ages were only for this end—"that by fear of them human wickedness might be restrained, and the life of the innocent be safe amidst the wicked."§ It would seem as if justice was the object for which every thing was sought and done, as is professed in the Socratic line, *δικαιοσύνης δὴ ἕνεκα πάντα ζητοῦμεν*.|| "A prince must not place his happiness in civil power," says Giles of Colonna, "for if he should have that opinion, he will study to train the citizens to nothing but the exercise of arms, and to those things by which he can subdue nations to himself. Therefore, he will lead the citizens not to justice, but to fortitude. Now justice is a greater

good than fortitude, therefore the citizens will be led to neglect the greater for the lesser good. Kings should place their felicity in the act of prudence commended by charity; and for the love of God they should govern the nation committed to them according to law and reason, holily and justly. A king is a name of office, for it is his duty to rule and direct the people to its proper end, as the name itself indicates; and for this reason he must have prudence, without which a man placed in royal dignity will become a tyrant, under the impression of sensible things, heeding nothing but how he can extort money."*

The justice which consisted in regarding the public interest was certainly in a remarkable manner predominant in the mind of many rulers and administrators of government during the middle ages. Louis X. Count of Evreux, guarding against the danger of future dissensions, says in his testament, that "the last will of a man is well ordered, when he provides for the salvation of his own soul, and for the peace of those whom he leaves heirs to his property."† Catholic annals are full of examples of this maxim being practiced by kings, in defiance of all family interests, and personal ambition. "Conrad having no male issue, Eberhard, his brother, was heir to the throne; but the king perceived that he did not possess the ability requisite, nor the manners which could gain the favour of the people; so that when he grew old, being frequently asked to commend him to the people, he always eluded it, and on his death-bed, taking him aside, he spoke as follows, 'My dear brother, I see, and I have always seen, that you are not favourably accepted by the people, and therefore to avoid causing you affliction, I always kept silence when I was addressed on your behalf; but if you will take counsel now of me, as I trust you will in God, you will not be inglorious. There is in Saxony, Henry, the husband of Matilda, to whom I know of no one equal in the kingdom. Taking, therefore, the crown and sceptre, travel day and night to him, and place yourself and the kingdom in his hands, and be ye both mindful of my life.' He did as the king advised, and on his arrival demanded a secret audience of the count. When every one else had withdrawn, he closed the door, took from under his cloak the crown and sceptre, threw himself at

* Wadd. Ann. Minorum, tom. VII.

† Juv. III. ‡ Heinsii Orat.

§ Legis Wisigothorum, Lib. I. tit. II. 5.

|| Plato de Repub. Lib. IV.

* De Regim. Princip. I. 1. 10. and II. 1. 7.

† Hist. D'Evreux. 220.

his feet, and related what had been said by Conrad. In fine, after a public deliberation, Henry, with consent of the Saxons and Franks, was anointed king, though subsequently, by the evil counsel of Kiselbertus, the unhappy Eberhard forfeited the glory of this noble action with his life."* Ludovicus Pius, himself an emperor, and son of Charlemagne, being made judge between Milegast king of the Vultzes and his subjects, who had deposed him, gave his verdict for the subjects, and for him whom they had chosen in his room. Michelet after relating the instructions of St Louis to his son, in which he says, that he would prefer seeing his kingdom governed well and loyally, by a Scot from Scotland, rather than ill by his own son, exclaims, "Beautiful and affecting words! It is difficult to read them without being moved. At the same time the emotion is mingled with reflections on one's self, and with sadness. This purity, this sweetness of soul, this astonishing elevation, to which Christianity raises its hero, who will give them back to us? Certainly, morality is more enlightened at the present day (attend reader, to the general burden of the passage) but is it more powerful? That is a question well calculated to trouble every sincere friend of the moral progress. Who does not thrill with joy on seeing the victory of equality? I only fear, lest in adopting so just a sentiment of his rights, man may have lost something of the sentiment of his duties. The heart sinks when one sees that in this progress of every thing, moral force has not increased. The notion of free will, and of moral responsibility, seems to grow weaker every day."†

Modern literature supplies many of these remarkable testimonies, to the excellence of the ancient Catholic state. Huber, in his *Sketches of Spain*, says, "that however paradoxical it may sound, there is perhaps no country so well adapted as Spain, where more, perhaps, of the manners, at least of that state, had been preserved than in any other country, to excite wholesome doubts respecting the pompous wisdom of our legislators, and statesmen. Let the material disadvantages belonging to the Spanish state, and people, be ever so much exaggerated, still, he continues, it cannot be denied that they are in a high degree a state; nay, besides what is more remarkable, that this order of things, how-

ever it may be called, has created and educated a people and race, which for capability of genuine moral worth, and natural application, is surpassed by no nation in the world, not even by that which presumes to suppose itself at the summit of European civilization."*

Speaking of those who condemn and scorn as barbarous the spirit and manners of the Spaniards, he says, "such judgments are perfectly worthy of the spirit of our whole civilization." The last end of our whole industrial representative system, is the production of the greatest possible quantity of material enjoyments, and their distribution amongst the greatest possible number of men. Freedom, knowledge, religion, poesy, are different wheels in the great machine which manufactures pleasure for the people. The people themselves are supposed to stand higher in civilization, in proportion as they have greater and more numerous physical enjoyments. All this has its good, and is matter for development. Only the pride which represents this as the only good, is not good; and it is allowable to hope in God, that some other object and motive may lie at the foundation of the life of a people, as of an individual, to hope that the vacuity of this system, by degrees may be shown and felt; and that for the worth of a nation, some other criterion may be proposed and recognised, than the number of yards of satin which it can annually produce.

It is the remark of a modern traveller to the East, that in the age of Guillaume de Champlite, prince of Morea, and Geoffroi de Villardouin, when the feudal system was established in Greece, governments protecting without boasting, both the liberty and the happiness of the people, had far stronger foundations than the interests of parties, or the popular fancies of the day. Accordingly, Feudal Greece lasted two centuries, and it owed its fall to circumstances independent of the established system.† Witness again that republic of Venice, which to the astonishment of all people, maintained itself for twelve centuries, an example of freedom to the human race; whereas the Spartans and Romans had only preserved theirs during eight, and five hundred years. The Catholic Church, like the Minerva of Æschylus, had warned her favoured people not to change their institutions. "All will go well," she said,

* Ekkehard de casibus S. Galli, cap. 5.

† Hist. de France, tom. II. 622.

* p. 25.

† Michaud, *Correspondance de l'Orient*, 124.

"provided the citizens do not introduce innovations into the laws, moved by evil influences; αὐτῶν πολιτῶν μὴ ᾗτικαίνουσιν νόμους κακὰς ἐπιφροαίσι."* Catholic free states did not, like the pagan Roman, owe their steadiness mainly to the subsistence of houses, in which principles and feelings might be transmitted for ages, as an heirloom, from generation to generation. Niebuhr cites the instance of the house of Russel in England; but we may say, that no country was left depending for its happiness upon any member of one family remaining true to the principle which it advocated some hundred years before.

There is profound philosophy, as well as a just historical statement, in a passage of Stephen Pasquier, in which he accounts for the preservation of the state of France, during times of extraordinary danger. "Witness," he says, "the reign of Charles VI. his madness, the civil wars, the entrance of the English, and how by a great mystery of God, the kingdom was, nevertheless, preserved to Charles VII. his son, and to his posterity. If you ask me the cause of such success, it is easy to gather it if one is versed in the history of France: for in the midst of all these troubles, every one conspired devoutly to maintain the dignity of the Church, and to extirpate errors as well as abuses."†

The same idea is presented in his great work. "The first race of kings, from Pharamond to Childeric, lasted," he observes, "336 years. The second 237 years; and the third has maintained itself to our times, the long duration of which, in comparison with the two former, may be thus accounted for. The two first produced magnanimous kings and warriors, but not of equal policy; and this last, along with force and magnanimity, founded institutions of law, and universities, in which theology was taught, which are not little provisions of police, for our preservation."‡

The internal administration of government was similarly characterized by the justice which requires that the happiness of the multitude should not be sacrificed to the interests of a few, under the pretence of constitutional forms. "If kings were not content with the honour of affection from the people," says Giles of Colonna, "but should require from the nation committed

to them other exterior goods, as gold and silver, they would be tyrants, for they would then become robbers of the people."* Accordingly, "neither under the first, nor under the second, nor for a very long time, under the third line of our kings, had we in France," says Pasquier, "these taxes, aids, and subsidies, which we now see. Under the third race, kings lived on their own domain, or treasure; but for extraordinary expenses, they had privileges, as in travelling, they would lodge for a night at a bishop's palace, or an abbey, which right was exchanged for a sum of money, called 'droit de giste.' The common people, in like manner, were bound to furnish horses or carts, from town to town, which was exchanged also for money, 'droit de chevauchée.' On knighting a prince of France, there would be a tax: but besides these extraordinary levies, none were ever made. Subsequently, Philip-le-Bel, by an invention of his own, invited the nobles, clergy, and third estate, to meet in assembly, and bring an offering for the public expenses; and as the commons liked such assemblies, as doing them honour, they were more disposed to give money with a good grace. And never was there a general assembly of the three estates of France, without increasing the finances of our kings, to the diminution of those of the people. But when the said king, in defiance of his preceptor, Giles of Colonna, sought to levy taxes by force, the people would not obey; and at Paris, Rome, and Orleans, openly revolted. By degrees, however, the tax was imposed permanently, though the king was obliged to swear that he would employ it only for necessary war, and the defence of the state.† Similarly to the present times, the imposts which the Biscayans pay to the king of Spain, have the name and character of a gratuitous gift."‡

But it is not alone from these general views, that we arrive at the desired conclusion, respecting the thirst of the middle ages, and its effects of justice. Our conclusions are not drawn merely from theories and general views. With their iron-clasped and iron-bound books of those times in our hands we can point out, and name the men whom we can conceive, and whom, without the Catholic Church, we can only conceive. Of all the great and good, who flourished from their commencement to their

* Eumenid. 698.

† Lettres de Pasquier, Liv. X. 6.

‡ Qui ne sont pas petits traits de police pour nous conserver. Recherches de la France, Liv. III. c. 13.

* De Regim. Princip. I. Lib. I. c. 9.

† Recherches de la France, Liv. II. 7.

‡ Bourgoign, Tableau de l'Espagne, I. 28.

close, it would indeed, as we have already observed, be impossible to speak; for truly, the prophetic view was verified in the friends of God! "I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand." It would be as hard for a mortal tongue to tell of these as, according to Hesiod, it would be to name the sons of Ocean, who are known to the immortal race.

"It was the desire, however, of the monastic historians," as William of Jumièges says of himself, "that the excellent merit of the just, in regard both to the things of this world, and to those of heaven, subsisting happily before the eyes of God, should also subsist usefully in the memory of men." To tell of deeds above heroic, though in secret done and unrecorded, left through many an age, worthy to have not remained so long unsung, would truly impart the rapture of a celestial music; though vain would be the attempt, unless we had drunk of that pure stream of Eunice, gifted with power, to bring remembrance back of every good deed done, whose taste exceedeth all flavours else; but God, who doth ever establish new examples of virtue in his Church,* leaveth us not in need of such complete and universal retrospects; and it is enough to tell of some who faithfully represented the ages to which they fell, though, as our limits warn us to speed, I must still prefer general impressions to multiplicity of detail, inviting the reader to contemplate, as it were, the soft illumination diffused over the whole sky of those ages, which are said to have been buried in the shades of night, without suffering his eyes to rest fixedly upon any one particular star.

There is a kind of praise bestowed on individuals, in ancient books, from which, undoubtedly, a judicious reader can infer nothing; but there are, on the other hand, eulogies of a different description, which can be admitted as historic evidence; for when Hugo Falcand observes that the virtue and incorruptible faith of Robert, Count of Lorotelli, Symon, Count of Polycastro, and Ebrard, Count of Squillace, were so well known to Maja of Bari, that when conspiring against William, king of Sicily, he felt assured that his own projects could not prosper, unless these noblemen were first removed;† or when the monk of Crowland, speaking of king Henry's

death, says of his enemy, "May God spare him, and give him space for penitence, who thus dared to lay sacrilegious hands upon the anointed of the Lord; a man of such innocence of life, of such patience in adversity, and of such love for God and for the Church;"* the mind of the most cautious reader acquiesces at once, and experiences an intimate sense of conviction as to the truth of the incidental panegyrics. There is also a mode of praise which, however we may feel inclined to doubt the justice of its application, in a particular instance, proves, at least, what was the mark at which desires ought to have been aimed, according to the general opinion and spirit of the age. Such is the testimony of the old chronicle of Du Guesclin, where speaking of King Charles of France, it adds, who "loved justice and chivalry with such sincerity, that he was a true man, and of holy life, as long as he lived." And such, that of the ancient historian of Bayard, who says, on the death of king Charles VIII., "I believe that God took him to be amongst the blessed, for the good prince was not stained with a single villainous vice."†

Of direct testimonies, I shall be content with producing but a few; for where should I end, if I were to adopt the manner of modern writers, in collecting all the attestations of grace, as they heap together all the charges of guilt which can be gathered from ancient books? Few words will suffice, to show the injustice of that remark, made by an illustrious writer of our time, where speaking of the men whose history we are recording, he says, "they adored at Calvary; they did not attend at the Sermon on the Mount;" a striking sentence, no doubt, but certainly it was not so that the contemporary observers described the men around them; on the contrary, the words of St. Odilo, in allusion to blessed Maiolus, his predecessor in the abbatial dignity of Cluny, corresponded with the common style of praise, bestowed upon all eminent persons, whether laymen or priests, who attracted their attention. "With the poor in spirit," as he says, "they wished to be poor, that they might be enriched by the King of Heaven with a celestial kingdom; with the blessed meek, they studied to become meek, that with them they might possess

* Prayer Fest. of St. Andrew Corsini.

† Hugo Falcandi Hist. Sicula Rer. Italic. Script. tom. VII.

* Hist. Croylandensis in Rer. Anglic. Script. tom. I.

† Chap. XI.

the land of the living ; with the blessed mourners, they desired to lament the negligence of their children, and the dangers of the whole world ; that with them all, they might come to the eternal consolation ; with those that hungered and thirsted after justice, they studied to associate with that justice, hungering and thirsting after it, that with them they might feast at the celestial banquet, and be satiated with spiritual delights ; with the merciful, they studied to be merciful, that with the blessed merciful they might obtain mercy from the Lord. As far as it was possible for men, by incessant desires, merits, and prayers, they deserved to attain to Divine contemplation, that with the blessed clean of heart, they might be admitted to the vision of God ; in order that they might be truly called the children of God, they learned to be pacific, not only to possess their own souls in patience, but also to bring back all that were at variance, to concord and peace. For the sake of justice, they learned to bear persecution, and passions, from the ancient enemy, and from evil men ; that blessed on account of suffering for justice, with the patient and the poor in spirit, they might become associates to obtain and possess the kingdom of heaven.**

Hear how Angelus Gualdensis, a blessed hermit of the thirteenth century, is described. "This man of God," saith a contemporary, "learned, and acquired, and truly preserved, the beatitudes which our Saviour taught his disciples in the Holy Gospel."† So interwoven was this ideal of justice with all general notions of religion, that, like the cross, it was expressed in material monuments, and symbolically represented in the very edifices of the middle age. Indeed, so early as in the times of St. Ambrose, if we credit Landulph, the old historian of Milan, the doctrine of the beatitudes was expressed in this manner ; for on the stone table, entitled the chrism of St. Ambrose, in that Church by which the catechumens were instructed in the principles of the faith, there was described a circle, within which eight lines were drawn, extending from the centre to the circumference, to signify the eight rules of blessed life, which are in God, who has neither beginning nor ending.‡ In the year 823, Eigil,

abbot of Fulda, constructed on a hill, near that monastery, which was a place of burial for the brethren, a mystic work, to denote, as the ancient historian observes, that we are all one body in Christ, by whom we are sustained with the eight beatitudes preached in the Gospel, and to whom, as to our sole and final mark, we tend. This was a little Church, under the title of St. Michael, of which the subterraneous part was supported by one column in the centre, from which arches sprang in all directions ; the remainder, which was in the form of an octagon, having eight columns, was terminated at the summit with a pyramidal arch, which was closed with a great stone.* The whole house, being thus supported by one stone, and closed by one, —typical and subtle work, which Candidus, the monk, describes in solemn verse in his metrical life of Eigil. It should be remembered, besides, that those whom the Church has canonized, cannot be excluded from the rank of historical personages ; the princes, warriors, statesmen, philosophers, the rich, the poor, the learned, and the simple men of all classes, during the ages of faith, contributed to augment that vast multitude ; and as Lewis of Granada says, "all the saints were poor in spirit, all were mild, all were merciful, all were clean of heart, all were pacific, all hungered and thirsted after justice, all mourned and wept for their own and others' sins ; and all suffered persecution for the sake of justice.†

If we look to the palaces of princes, we find the court of a Charles V. of France, preserved in such purity of manners, that if the king ever heard of any of the courtiers having a dishonourable connection, however he might have loved him, from that moment he deprived him of all favour, drove him from the court, and would see him no more. Christine de Pisan says, that no book of a pernicious tendency to manners, was suffered to be within the palace, nor any person to remain whose language was not chaste and innocent.‡ Accordingly, when this prince resolved that the minority of the future kings of France should expire after their fourteenth year, by his edict from Vincennes in 1374, full of fine reasons and histories, as Pasquier says, he did not fear to appeal publicly to

* Vita S. Maioli Abb. Clun. IV. S. Odilone auct. Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 284.

† Annal. Camaldulens. Lib. XLV.

‡ Landulph. Mediolanens. Hist. Liv. I. c. 12. in Muratori Rer. Italic. Scriptor. tom. IV.

* Schannat. Historia Fuldensis, Pars III.

† Ludovic. Granatens. de omnibus sanctis concio, I.

‡ Livre des faits et bonnes meurs du sage Roy Charles V. c. 29.

the judgment of men, in confirmation of the fact that all kings, and especially those of France, were from their infancy placed under such good masters for education, that no danger could be anticipated from placing power in their hands at that early age.* Whatever may be thought of the opinion, such an appeal from a just, and wise king, who respected his people, is assuredly remarkable.

At all events, it is not from the history of the middle age, that Milton would be enabled to justify his position, that kings are commonly the worst of men. In a former book we saw kingly power wielded by the blessed meek, and here it presents itself to our view in the hands of the just. Roderic Santius speaks of the early Spanish sovereigns, as if he had known, from having been vouchsafed, like Dante, a vision of paradise, how well is loved in heaven the righteous King. Lo! he makes them pass before you, and names them: "Suinilla the 26th king of the Goths, loved of God and men. Alfonso I. the Catholic, dear to God, and to men. Tulas, the 29th king, Catholic, and full of all goodness, humble, liberal, loving justice, beloved by clergy and people. Alfonso the Chaste, the 9th king after the slaughter of Spain, sober, chaste, pious, and humble. Recaredus, most zealous for the Catholic faith, against the Arians; one of the best kings of Spain. Alfonso VII. a true lover of justice. Santius III. called the Desired, so holy and innocent, that his premature death at Toledo, was ascribed to the singular love which God had for his soul. Alfonso VIII., the Good, who married Leonora, daughter of Richard, king of England, blessed in his offspring. Ferdinand III. most glorious, most religious king, not so much to be praised, on account of his many victories, as for having, in the splendour of the palace, and at the summit of human honour, feared God, worshipped the Church, and deserted not the place of virtue; amidst the abundance of riches, and the delights of royal blood, setting his heart not on the increase of his own dominion, but on the propagation of the faith, for which he exposed his life daily to every danger."†

Such was the renown of King Ferdinand the Saint, and so esteemed was he even by the infidels, that at his death Mohamed

Abu Alahmar, the Moorish king of Granada, sent a train of 100 Moorish knights, who were to assist at the funeral, each carrying a lighted taper; and this grand testimony of respect was repeated by the Moslem monarch, on each anniversary of the death of king Don Ferdinando el Santo, when the 100 knights, with their tapers, took their station round the cataphalque.

There is a beautiful narrative in an ancient chronicle, which places the Christian virtue and continence of a Spanish king in an admirable light. Bartholomew de Neocastro relates that the people of Messina, being delivered from the French, and having invited Peter, king of Arragon, to accept the crown of Sicily, on the expulsion of Charles of Anjou, that prince set out from his states, invoking the name of Jesus Christ, and after a prosperous journey, arrived amidst his new subjects, though being a prudent prince, he still travelled slowly at easy stages, in order to watch the course of events. One evening, coming to a spot on the sea-shore, near Miletus, whence there was a delightful view over the Mediterranean, embracing the islands of Lipari and Stromboli, the place seemed so convenient and delicious, that he resolved to pass the night there. When all were taking their rest, there came to him an old man of horrid mien, and rough garments, who had descended from the rocks of Mount Etna, in order to speak unto him. He warned the king to beware of the Sicilians. The following night, the king being at Casale Santa Lucia, which is only two miles from Miletus, there came to him Machalda Alaymi, wife of the soldier Leontinus, a woman of great beauty, and of martial spirit, who had done great service in the cause of Sicily, delivering it from the French. "Seigneur," she said to him, "I come to be your guest this night, because at the last hospice, there was no lodging to be obtained, owing to the multitude of people assembled to welcome you amongst us. I have come to see you, like the other Sicilians. This is a happy day; this to me is a day of consolation and joy, in which the Lord, on account of you, hath delivered Sicily from its miseries." This woman wore armour, and she held in her hand a silver key; there was a certain composition of mystery in her mien, which comprised an air of cunning, as with firm and laughing eyes she gazed upon the prince. The king suddenly rising up, led her, with his attendants, to the

* Recherches de la France, Liv. II. c. 19.

† Roderici Santii Episcop. Palentini Hist. Hispanie Pars II. et III. apud Hispanie illustratæ, Francofurt MDCCIII.

place where she should repose, while he intended to have a spot remote for himself. The lady, however, sat down with him, who was unwilling, and the king said to his chief steward, "It is time now to retire to rest;" and this he said, adds the historian, "that she might go away;" but she only staid there the more adhesively. The king then seeing that she chose to stay, tried in another way of courtly ingenuity, to divert her from her unhappy purpose; and he said to her, "Lady, what is it that you fear worst of all things?" She replied, "Lest my husband should fall." "Lady," he said again to her, "What is it that you love most of all things?" "What is not mine," was her subtle reply; still the king wished to endeavour, by honest conversation, to wave her from her design; so having called his knights and domestics, he said to them, "Let us pass the night in familiar discourse, till the hour for proceeding forth;" and he said to the woman, "Lady, do you wish to hear what perhaps you have never heard? the history of my birth, and the chief mystery of my life?" And she said, "Willingly." Then said the king, "The noble queen, our mother, was daughter of the king of Hungary, and her name was Nicolesia; and our lord father, was the good king James of Arragon. The lady, our mother, told us that the Omnipotent Christ showed prodigies of his power, on the night of our conception. Dreadful thunder, and flames of fire, and sheets of hail broke over Barcelona that night, so that wild beasts fled from the woods, and mountains, and came terrified to the shore. The earth trembled, and the sea roared, and swelled to a fearful height; the citizens filled the courts of the palace, and there came an old man, and said to our lord father, Seigneur, I am a hermit and my dwelling is on Mount Serrat; and I have come to you, led by the Good Spirit. I had gone some distance from my cave, to a spot called 'Saxum vitæ,' looking for roots of herbs, my accustomed food. And while I remained this night under the rock praying, a voice came to me saying, 'a wondrous fruit has been conceived.' And soon after, the priest of the palace came to the queen, our mother, and said, 'Lady, I left my bed in terror, and entering the chapel, I prostrated myself before the sacred altar;' and I heard a voice, saying, 'A lion is conceived, which will be great amongst the people.' The queen, too, our mother, had a wondrous

vision to the same effect. Behold, then, in process of time I was born, and as I grew up, I was trained to sacred worship, and to faith in Christ; and I was taught the art of war; and when I was eighteen years old, I was, by the grace of Christ, united in legitimate marriage to Constantia, moved by whose tears I have now taken up arms, to revenge the death of her father. And see to what casualties of war, and to what perils I have not feared to expose myself. And know, that to her for whose sake I have done this, and to Christ, who is the Giver of grace, I have promised, that as my cause is holy, so shall be my life; nor will I indulge in voluptuous repose, until the tears of my Constantia shall have ceased to flow, and until she shall have obtained full justice in the punishment of traitors, and satisfaction for her father's death." After thus saying, he was silent; and the woman replied, "Seigneur, how old are you? And of what age is your wife, whom you love so much? And the king replied, "That he was fifty-three, and the queen thirty-seven years of age." The woman said no more, but retired, supposing that the king would do the same; but he took up his arms, and roused his men, and prepared to set forth. She then, unwillingly, followed him; but from that hour she became his implacable enemy, and left no stone unturned to estrange her husband from him, and to undermine the stability of his new power. This interview took place on the 2nd of October, in the year 1282.*

The historians of the middle age are ridiculed by the moderns, for having recorded such numberless instances of supernatural agency; but it should be remembered, that they always evince an intimate conviction, that the great surpassing miracle of their times, was the number of rich men that entered into the kingdom of heaven. If we now descend to lower ranks, we are presented with direct evidence, not only of purity and decorum of manners, but of the most fervent exercise of all the Christian duties. Thus we find St. Theresa, speaking of a very honest merchant of Toledo, named "Martin Ramirer," who led an exemplary life; being sincere and faithful in his commerce, and thinking of augmenting his goods, only in order to perform more works agreeable to

* Bartholomæ de Neocastro Historia Sicula, cap. 41. apud Muratori Rer. Italic. Scriptorum, tom. XIII.

God; and elsewhere speaking of another merchant of Toledo, named Alphonso of Avila, who, like the former, being unmarried, was only occupied in assisting prisoners, and performing other good works.*

In addition to these sources, we have likewise a class of documents, consisting in general views of the manners of society in different countries, presented by writers of the middle age, as the result of their personal observations, which are very remarkable.

In the twelfth century, before Frederick openly disputed against the Church, and the names of Guelph and Ghibelline were known, the citizens of Bologna are described as contending with each other only in zeal for virtue. "Friendship was then the boast of youth, nor was that purity of manners affected by the clouds of fleshly concupiscence, which obscure the heart and prevent the serenity of love from being distinguished from the darkness of lust. The fruits of love were then conversations, innocent mirth, and deeds of benevolence; the delight which charmed was to read sweet books, side by side, to labour together, to dissent sometimes from each other without hate,—as when a man debates with himself,—to teach and to learn mutually, to desire the absent with modesty, and to hail the present with joy. This abundance of a loving heart was manifested by the tongue, the eyes, and a thousand graceful motions. Then, in every house, were found honest shame, and continence, and conjugal love, and virtuous sobriety and moderation. The dignity of families did not depend upon riches, which were rare in Italian houses, but on the number and honour of their members. Manners were simple and redolent of the antique world, so that men rose from banquets to study or to business, for which their temperate feast only gave them a greater relish. Liberty was retained and cherished, as part of human good, though sometimes there was more peril in restoring than happiness in possessing it, and to good men liberty was never wanting.†

Ambrose Leo draws such a picture of the inhabitants of Nola in his age, that he quite transports his reader into a terrestrial paradise, and makes him imagine that he wanders amidst the sweet villas and gardens of that courteous, benign, and hospitable people, "in whose manners are combined,"

he says, "the strictest chastity and temperance, with the utmost elegance and refinement. No factions, quarrels, treasons, or murders, ever disturb that serene state, from which no outcast of vicious life, in whom lust or avarice sways reason, is ever seen in any town of Italy. Here men are tillers of the ground, and content with their lot; so that rarely any inhabitant wishes to travel, or lose sight of the city towers, or pass beyond the sound of their bells. Lorenzo Bulino, a youth, was absent with me during three days, and afterwards coming back, when we arrived at the city gate, he jumped from his horse and kissed it, as during the whole journey he continually declared he would do, if God should grant him a happy return."*

In the great collection of Italian antiquities by Grævius and Burmann, there is a remarkable description of Callipolis, in the Japygian land, and of the manners of that people, given by the celebrated philosopher and most learned physician Antonio Galateo. "Here," saith he, "men are most pure, most moral, not liars, not rapacious, not seditious, not intemperate, not ambitious, and, what Plato ascribes to maritime cities, not unjust, nor fraudulent, but veracious, faithful, abstemious, contented, charitable; and, notwithstanding the sea and the multitude of mercenary troops, and the influx of foreigners, preserving their integrity and constancy. In peace, mild, tractable, and humane; and of their bravery in war, the Venetians, Spaniards, and French can best speak. The education of boys and young men is liberal and modest. Arrogance and insolence are not found amongst our youth, who are full of love for one another, and benevolence. But what is above all important, the people are not negligent of religion and the divine worship; St. Agatha, patroness of the city, they piously venerate, and what we have such difficulty to persuade the sick to do, these people, whether about to live or die, of their own accord, have constant recourse to the sacraments. The virtue of the women corresponds to these manners; they are chaste, industrious, and obedient. On holidays they stay much at home; on other days they spin. The beauty and exquisite grace of our maidens are only equalled by their modesty. No one sees them at a window; no one ever receives from them a gesture or a look to embolden dishonest thoughts. At thirteen,

* Foundation of the Carmelite Monast. of Toledo.

† Barth. Dulcini de vario Bononiæ statu, Lib. IV. Thesaur. Antiq. Italicæ, VII.

* Ambros. Leonis de Nola, Lib. III. c. 6. Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. tom. IX.

you will find few unmarried. Good men, and lovers of truth, cannot pass over in silence the virtue of an enemy. The Venetians are not styled most Christian, yet, when they took our city, as true Christians and Italians, they respected the women, and guarded them diligently in the church of St. Agatha; they abstained from slaughter and destruction, and wished to give up their captives. Upon the whole, my Summonti, I know of no city more capable of serving the purposes of a happy life, if one knows how to enjoy it; none more fit for a sweet and tranquil existence. Here are no affairs but domestic, and those not considerable; no tumults but those of the sea and the winds; here are no seditions, no strifes or very rarely, no proud thresholds, no excess of pleasures or of riches to corrupt manners; here is equal justice,—that oft-depicted, long sought and wished for *isomopia*, grateful, as Plato says, to God and men. Here is the image and shadow of that holy city which will be in heaven, and which from heaven to earth has never descended. There is, indeed, between high and low, nobles and people, a certain distance here, but it is such as philosophers, and Plato himself would praise; not too great, not proud, not contumelious, which holy men abominate, so that one should be thirsty and another drunken, one able to touch heaven with his head and another sunk down to the abyss; here is neither servitude nor licence, but a certain moderate equality; there is degree as to race, riches, dignity, magistracy, for absolute equality is the greatest inequality; but as far as justice and freedom require, there is true equality. Here are few dissensions, few insane clamours, few crimes, few hatreds, no deceptions, no prisons; here we live without envy, without ambition, without pride, without injury, without luxury; we have neither superfluities nor distress. Here one lives without fear and in the utmost concord, as in a citadel. There are no taxes. We enjoy a salubrious air, delicious prospects over sea and land: here I live temperately, and enjoy athletic vigour. At the ninth or tenth hour of the night I rise, and employ myself in writing or reading before sun-rise if it be a festival or a vigil, I go to the church of St. Agatha, if it be not, I pray at home. At the first light I walk forth and visit the sick. Then I dine, and afterwards study or receive those who wish to consult me respecting their health. At the twentieth hour I

again go forth to visit the sick, and return home at nightfall, where are always some of no deficiency in genius waiting to converse with me, on philosophy, on manners, or on mathematics. Such is the life of your Galateus, such the city which he inhabits.*

Methinks this picture of the real state of Otranto, can inspire as much delight as that which represents its romantic history. Nor are these general discourses mere panegyrics. Bernardin Gomisius describes the different provinces of Spain, without concealing the peculiar vices of each people. "The Valencians," saith he, "are of a mercurial and hasty disposition, joyous, and infantine, from abounding so much in the natural goods of life, so that they are said to be mindful neither of the past nor future, being satisfied with the present; whereas the people of Arragon always gloried in the past, and in the fame of their ancestors, despising the present, and preserving untouched their ancient laws. The Catalonians, inhabiting a sterile soil, are solicitous about the future, so as scarcely to think of the present, and, therefore, they are more liberal than the others; so that they almost surpass all other Christians in bounty to the poor of Christ, and in the pomp of divine worship being truly cheerful givers, and never more joyous than when they can confer benefits; and though voluble and inconstant, often to their own injury, yet they evince with all an admirable goodness, and being corrected by reason and art, they are on that account only the more capable of excellent things; for the youth are removed far from the indulgence of parents, and initiated in the severe principles of the Christian discipline. To these happy effects many things conduce; strict laws rigidly enforced, the exemplary lives of many most grave citizens, models of manners for imitation, and that inherent religion of the state, which impels them to piety and to the exercise of all social virtues, by means of which the mobility of their minds, instead of leading to inconstancy and temerity, reduces them to better fruit of life, to gravity and perseverance."†

In like manner John Vasaëus, another Spanish historian, expresses his admiration of the frugality and modesty of all the youth of Salamanca, while Don John

* Ant. Galatei Callipolis descriptio apud The-saur. Antiq. Italiae, tom. IX.

† Bernardini Gomezi de Vita Jacobi I. Arragon. Lib. XII.

Guignonio held the office of chancellor.* "I dwelt fifty years in Spain," says Lucius Marinæus, the Sicilian, "and I never saw an instance of intemperance."† Torquemada speaks of an inhabitant of Salamanca who went to Toledo and returned, having been absent fifteen or twenty days, during which time he had never tasted wine.‡ The manners of Spain were not then singular in this respect, for in few countries was the race of men numerous, that would have disdained the suitors of Penelope for mixing water with their wine.§ It was not till the decline of faith in Germany, that there was a return to the ancient manners ascribed to it by Tacitus, when he says, "diem noctemque continuare potando nulli probrum."|| In the decrees collected by Ives de Chartres, a penance of forty days was imposed on any one who made another drunk, and if accustomed to give such invitations, he was to be deprived of communion.¶ Charlemagne, by one of his capitularies, had forbidden,

under severe penalty, this custom of encouraging others to drink at banquets.

In France, when intemperance first became common, in the year 1536, the penalty of banishment and the loss of ears was denounced against drunkards, on being convicted four times. Imprisonment, on bread and water, being the punishment for the first offence.

We may close these general observations by remarking that the opinion of the sophists respecting the comparative merit of national manners, where the new opinions were established, and those of Catholic countries, was in general contemptuously rejected by all writers on their side who were raised above the vulgar. "I fled to Italy," says Milton, in answer to the charge of his accuser, "not as to the place of refuge to the profligate, but because I knew and had found before, that it is the retreat of civility and of all polite learning."*

CHAPTER III.



WE cannot proceed further without taking another glance at the interior life of families during the middle ages, in order to ascertain in what degree domestic manners corresponded with the blessed thirst, and what were the fruits of justice which peculiarly distinguished them. Niebuhr says it is exceedingly interesting to catch a glimpse of the every day transactions of antiquity; and if so grave a writer can find it so, in relation to such details as the business of witnesses at sales in pagan Rome, surely

there is nothing in the mere fact of heathenism having been superseded by Christianity, that can render the manners and household economy of the middle ages unworthy of an historian's regard.

"Never, perhaps," says a modern French writer, "was the virtue of domestic life recommended and described with more esteem and charm than during the middle ages. It was not merely celebrated by the poets. It is clear, from a crowd of witnesses, that the public thought like the poets, and formed the same judgment respecting these kind of actions.†" That exquisite intermingling of philosophy and religion, passion and domestic fondness, which some pronounce to be the true desideratum of the virtuous mind, and the best earthly consummation of our imperfect nature, forms at least one of the

* Joan. Vasei Brugensis Rer. Hispanicarum, Chronic. c. 3.

† Lucii Marini de Rebus Hispaniæ, Lib. V.

‡ Hexameron d'Anthoine Torquemada, trad. par Chapuis Roma, 1625.

§ Od. I. 110.

|| De Moribus Germanorum.

¶ Ivonis Carnot. Decret. Pars XIII. 83.

* Second Defence of the People of England.

† Guizot, Cours d'Hist. tom. IV. 6.

peculiar characteristics of those times. In this respect the manners of the middle age seem to have existed with all their force in Spain, until the entrance of the French spirit in modern times, an epoch which henceforth should be designated as "the slaughter of Spain."

"The social and domestic life of the Spaniards," says Huber, "is distinguished by a freshness, and simplicity, and freedom, to a degree beyond, perhaps, what can be found with any other European people. The kind of ease and equality which characterizes society, is almost unknown in other lands. In the Tertulla, on the Paseo, on the public walk, the artisan, the merchant, the officer, the civilian, the clergy of every rank, the noble, the marquis, and count, converse with each other on a footing of the most perfect equality. It is worthy of remark," he continues, "that this equality prevails in an equal degree even among women, who, in other countries, so often discharge the unamiable office of priestesses to the pride of nobility, wealth, office, or title. Nevertheless, from what is here said respecting social freedom and equality, it must not be inferred that there is any confusion of degree, or any indication of individual vanity overstepping the just limits of place and rank in the community. For the most part, the independence of the lower classes has never in Spain, the haughty, aggressive, insolent tone, which in France and England, is so often found alternating with cringing servility."

"We have seen," says Rubichon, "states presenting sword in hand popular institutions, or what were called such. And what states? those in which the nourishment of the poor is confided to persons to whom the nourishment of horses and dogs would never have been confided. And presenting them to whom? To Spain, Portugal, and Italy, whose pontiffs, sovereigns, and grantees, are objects of mockery in these foreign states, on account of the simplicity of their manners, and of their familiarity with the lowest of the people and the poor."*

The Roman satirist describes the insolence with which the rich treated their poorer guests and clients, to whom were always offered food and wine of an inferior quality, and who were not allowed to speak with freedom, as if they were invited to

cause mirth to the company.* It was not so in Catholic ages, at the baronial court. Stephen Pasquier, speaking of the singular felicity of the President de Thou, who was born of a noble race, honoured by his king, and no less by the people, says that his table and conversation were generally with the middle classes, and that the moment he came home, he used to lay aside all the grandeur of his state. He never supped from home, and he used to retire to bed at nine o'clock and rise very early, being always his own chamberlain. He used with great simplicity to return from the palace unattended,† a custom which would now be termed profaning the dignity of his office, and dragging its insignia through the mire.

Homer represents Telemachus as a model of filial inferiority and obedience, always instantaneously submitting to his father's nod; and one might suppose that the answer which Dionysius Halicarnassus ascribes to the Horatii, when Tullus desired them to say whether they were willing to fight the Curatii for the defence of their country, had been taken from some monastic or feudal historian. "O, Tullus, if we had power to determine this question for ourselves," said the eldest, speaking for the rest, "we should answer you without delay; but since our father is still living, without whom we do not think it right to say or do the least thing, οὐδέ τολάχιστα λέγειν ἢ πράττειν ἀξιούμεν, we must beg a little delay, that we may consult with him."‡ Atticus declared, at his mother's funeral, that he had never been reconciled to her; by which he meant, that he had never given her displeasure so as to require forgiveness. All this seems worthy of the filial piety which was so prominent a feature in Catholic manners during ages of faith, before men had been taught or encouraged to throw away respect, traditions, forms, and ceremonious duty. "With his father and mother, honouring them as a true Catholic son, he lies here interred," says the epitaph on Martial d'Auvergne.§ Octavian de Saint Gelais, shows himself another of these Catholic sons, when expressing his horror on seeing, in a vision, his father's spirit among those that had made shipwreck on the perilous worldly sea.

* Juv. Sat. V.

† Lettres, Lib. VII. 10.

‡ Antiquit. Roman. Lib. III. c. 17.

§ Gouget, Bibliothèque Française, tom. X. 40.

* Du Mécanisme de la Société en France et en Angleterre, 320.

"Ha que moult fut mon cœur plein de douleur
Quant j'avis se chevaloureux corps.
Car pour certain c'estoit mon très-cher père,
Que vy noyé en mondaine misère."

His first impression prompted him to leap into the sea and embrace his father in the waves, but an interior voice forbade him, declaring that there was no remedy.* The extraordinary love which Pope Urban the Fourth evinced for the Cistercian monastery of Nôtre Dame des Prez, in the diocese of Troyes, was said to have arisen from the circumstance of his mother having been buried within it.†

Certainly, it speaks much in proof of the filial reverence which prevailed in the middle ages, to observe how many churches and monasteries, the building of which had been commenced by fathers and mothers, were, after their death, completed by the voluntary piety of their children.‡ Behold a scene represented by Ratpert in his history of St. Gall. Wolfleoz, bishop of Constance, after afflicting Cotzpert, abbot of that monastery, in divers manners, denied to the monks their right of free election; and knowing that their own charters had been burnt, cited them to appear with him before the Emperor Lewis, in whose presence he produced a charter from his own collection, which he ordered to be read; but, through mistake, his minister had brought a different document from what he had intended, so that he produced a charter that had been granted by Charlemagne, in the time of Bishop John, which was decisive in favour of the monks. This diploma was no sooner opened, than the Emperor recognised the seal of his father, when he immediately raised it to his lips with veneration, and then delivered it to be presented to all who were present, that it might be kissed by every one in sign of honour. After this act of filial reverence, he ordered the charter to be read, and decided in conformity to his father's will.§ A contrary spirit was regarded with universal horror. S. Peter Damian writes from the desert, to censure Albert, a great and powerful nobleman of that time, because tidings have reached him that, at the instigation of his wife, he does not treat his own mother with sufficient respect.|| When the Marquis of

Cadiz, on entering Ronda, hastened to deliver his unfortunate companions in arms from the dungeons of the fortress, he found many of them almost naked, with irons at their ankles, and having beards reaching to their waists: there were several young men of noble families, who, with filial piety, had surrendered themselves prisoners in place of their fathers. "The benedictions," says Stephen Pasquier, "which we give our children, do not depend only upon a sign of the cross which we make on them, when by that exterior mark we commend them to God; and as for malediction, though we do not curse them, yet still if there be within us any secret evil opinion of them, though it had only a simple colour of justice, it is an unhappy prognostic of their future life."* Of the authority of parents and of husbands, a very high sense was certainly entertained, "Fili uxorque qui non venerantur illum, sed æquales se exhibent, quamvis egregie ament, pro monstis tamen habendi sunt," says Cardan,† and Marsilius Ficinus speaks to the same effect in his treatise *De Officiis*, addressed to Cherubin Quarquatio.‡ If, however, the expectations of parents were great, it must be confessed, that they were seldom deficient in fulfilling those duties which entitled them to the devotional love and reverence of their children. Pythagoras assigned as chief cause for revering parents, that it is from them men receive the worship of the Deity;§ and though since the latter days of grace, the worship of God has never been depending upon domestic traditions, yet the exact discharge of the religious duties of Christian parents, was regarded, during the middle ages, as justifying a claim to more gratitude than could be due on the ground of having transmitted any secular or material advantage. Thus Charles de Bourgueville, in his researches on the antiquities of Normandy, speaking of his own origin, and of his being born of noble parents, observes, that "he considers his being received into the society of Christians by baptism, as the most signal favour that was ever bestowed upon him;"|| and Hieronymus Rubeus, the noble and learned physician who wrote the history of Ravenna, seems chiefly grateful to his

* *Gouget, Bibliothèque Française, tom. X. 267.*

† *Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 362.*

‡ *Italia sacra, passim.*

§ *Raperti de casibus S. Galli apud Goldast, Rer. Allem. tom. I.*

|| *Epist. 3. Lib. VIII.*

* *Lettres de Pasquier, Lib. XI. 3.*

† *De Sapientia, Lib. II.*

‡ *Epist. Lib. III.*

§ *Jamblich. de Pythagoric. Vita, cap. 8.*

|| *Les Recherches et Antiq. de Normandie.*

father, from remembering his custom of leading him frequently, when a boy, to see a venerable blind priest, Antonio Monnetulo, who impressed him with such reverence, that he says, "I would never have quitted his side if I could have had leave. On feast days, after vespers, this holy man," saith he, "used to preach in the convent of the good Jesus at Ravenna, sitting in the middle of the church; but at home every day he used to exhort those who came to see him, who were not few, to embrace a holy life, as true Christians and Catholics. You would see crowds flocking to converse with him: and I knew another such old man, Crispoldo, at Rome, though not blind, who was always similarly shut up in a blessed little room, where he was constantly either meditating or speaking, or reading, or writing about divine things."* Nobility itself was preserved and transmitted more by means of parental admonitions than by descent of blood; for as the old pilgrims would say, "vie debonnaire, juste et sainte retient l'homme en honneur, sans jamais avoir deshonneur."† It would have been well for some families in modern times, even in regard to worldly honour, if, as in the palace of Priam, there had been an altar in the centre of the house! Nothing can be more admirable than the instructions which we find the parents of the middle ages giving to their children.

Hear how Stephen Pasquier writes to his son Peter, who was a young soldier—"Be sober, gentle, affable, and prize the blessing of the poor people. Above all, blaspheme not the name of God. It is a heresy, and a detestable opinion, that oaths and blasphemies become valour, whereas modesty in word and deed is its greatest ornament."‡ Hear again his counsel to his son Theodore, whom he had educated for the bar: "If you would be a good pleader be a just and good man; for you will easily persuade those who believe you to be such; but if you have an evil reputation, all the eloquence of Cicero and Demosthenes will serve you nothing. Never undertake a cause which you do not believe to be good. Combat for truth, not for victory; but all this is included in the first qualification. I do not merely wish you to be a just man, I want this justice to be armed with a living force to

hurl vice to the earth, to sustain the afflicted poor, to meet fearlessly the efforts of the most powerful, who would abuse their grandeur. Let all courtier-like fear of displeasing the great be far from you; for though you may offend them for a time, they will afterwards choose you for their advocate, because you faithfully served your clients against them. It is sinning against the Holy Ghost to nourish your clients with false hopes, in order that the cause may be protracted. Perhaps your practice will be less for this, but it will be more secure and more honourable. Let your pleadings be modest in regard to your opponents, but without prevarication. Spare, however, their shame. Be avaricious, not of money, but of honour. Thus conducting yourself, I commit the care of your fortune to God, whom you should implore in all your actions, and he will never leave those who call upon him with a devout heart."*

The letters of that illustrious nobleman and philosopher, John Picus of Mirandula, to his nephew, John Francis, present another admirable picture of the spirit of domestic relations in that age—"It is a folly" he says to him, "not to believe in the Gospel, whose truth is proclaimed by the blood of martyrs, whose prodigies resound on apostolic tongues, which reason confirms, the world attests, the elements proclaim, the demons confess; but it is a still greater folly, if you do not doubt of the truth of the Gospel, and yet live as if you did not doubt that it was false: for if it be true that 'it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God,' why should we thirst after riches? If it be true that not the glory which is from men ought to be desired, but that which is from God, why should we hang upon the judgments of men? If what Christ affirms of his future coming be true, why should we fear nothing less than hell, or hope for nothing with less ardour than heaven?"‡ Subsequently we find this virtuous nephew, John Francis, writing to exhort a relation to persevere in conforming his manners to the rule of Christ, and accounting for his giving such admonition on the ground of necessity of blood, ancient custom, and especial love.†

French writers of the time of Louis XIV. were generally inclined to judge with

* Hieron. Rubi Hist. Ravennatum, Lib. IX.

† Le grant Voyage de Jerusalem, CVIII.

‡ Lettres de Pasquier, Lib. XI. 3.

* Lettres de Pasquier, Lib. IX. 6.

† Johan Picus Mirandula Epist. Lib. I.

‡ Epist. Lib. III.

severity whatever belonged to the middle ages, yet Gouget, speaking of Champier's work entitled "the testament of an old prince, which, at the end of his days he left to his son, to instruct him how to follow virtue and to fly from sin," admits that "the precepts are useful and solid, and well calculated to promote piety and the fear of God."* Nor was it merely children who were thus admonished by their parents; all dependents were similarly instructed in the respective duties of their state, and urged to play not the part of idle truants, omitting the sweet benefits of time to clothe their age with angel-like perfection. Thus we read of Francis Borgia passing his youth in the house of his father, the Duke of Gandia, that he was bred up "amongst the domestics in wonderful innocence and piety." In fact in the castles of the middle age, if you will credit Marchangy, the pages themselves were often little saints,† while, as at the castle of Vincennes, there were angels in stone carved over the gate. "The Seigneur de Ligny led Bayard home with him," says an ancient writer, "and in the evening preached to him as if he had been his own son, recommending him to have honour always before his eyes."‡

Truly beautiful does the fidelity of chivalrous youth appear in the page of history or romance. Every master of a family in the middle ages, had some young man in his service who would have rejoiced to shed the last drop of his blood to save him, and who, like Jonathan's armour bearer, would have replied to his summons, "*Fac omnia quæ placent animo tuo : perge quo cupis, et ero tecum ubicumque volueris.*"§ When Gyron le Courtois resolved to proceed on the adventure of the Passage périlleux, we read that the varlet on hearing the frankness and courtesy with which his lord spoke to him, began to weep abundantly, and said all in tears, "Sire, know that my heart tells me, that sooth if you proceed farther, you will never return; that you will either perish there, or you will remain in prison; but nathless, nothing shall prevent me from going with you. Better die with you, if it be God's will, than leave you in such guise to save my own life;" and so saying, he stepped forward and said, "Sire, since you will not return, according to my advice, I will

not leave you this time come to me what may." Authority in the houses of the middle ages was always venerable. The very term *senechal*, is supposed to have implied old knight, so that, as with the Greeks, the word signifying to honour, and to pay respect, was derived immediately from that which denoted old age—*πρεσβεία* being thus used in the first line of the Eumenides.* Even to those who were merely attached by the bonds of friendship or hospitality, the same lessons and admonitions were considered due. John Francis Picus, of Mirandula, mentions his uncle's custom of frequently admonishing his friends, exhorting them to a holy life. "I knew a man," he says, "who once spoke with him on the subject of manners, and who was so much moved by only two words from him which alluded to the death of Christ as the motive for avoiding sin, that from that hour he renounced the ways of vice, and reformed his whole life and manner."†

Giles of Colonna shows the advantage of having holy books read aloud, in the vulgar idiom, during the repasts of the family. Henry Suso, of the family of the Counts of Mons, who became afterwards a Dominican friar, and an eminent ascetic philosopher, dying in the odour of sanctity at Ulm, in the year 1365, was first excited to serve God with fervour, by hearing the sweet invitations with which eternal wisdom allures a soul to receive her inestimable treasure, read at the baronial table. Thus the Book of Wisdom used to be read at the banquet of the feudal castle, and, as the present example shows, often to hearers of a true heroic stamp, full of noble enthusiasm for all justice. This youth, not able to contain himself, burst aloud into the following exclamations: "Oh, I will set myself with all my power to procure this happy wisdom. If I am possessed of it I am the happiest of men. I will desire, I will seek, I will ask for nothing else. She herself invites me. Adieu, all other thoughts and pursuits. I will never cease praying and conjuring, with all the ardour of my soul, this divine wisdom to visit me." What, think you, must have been the banquet hall of an Ansold, son of Peter, seigneur of Maule, that renowned warrior of the eleventh century, who, as Orderic Vitalis says, was "almost equal to philosophers in his discourse, who used to frequent the churches, lending an attentive

* Bibliothéq. Française, tom. X. 217.

† Tristan, vol. V.

‡ La très joyeuse hystoire du bon Chev. Bayart, chap. 9.

§ 1 Reg. c. 14.

* Æschyl.

† In vita ejus.

and judicious ear to the sacred sermons, committing to memory the lives of the fathers, which he heard recited, detesting all lying narrations, as well as the authors who changed the word of God, and publicly refuting their wicked sophisms.”*

Perhaps I shall be condemned as fanciful, but I cannot avoid recognising justice even in that air of melancholy which, as we before observed, encompassed the feudal towers, and left some trace of its action in all the forms and manners of domestic life in the middle ages. It will not surprise me if those who have abandoned Catholic thoughts and manners should receive such a suggestion with disdain; for in general when they look sadly, it is for want of money; and those that are sad, like Shakspeare's young philosopher, betray themselves to every censure worse than drunkards; but I remark that the blessed St. Francis, who cultivated the cheerful spirit, and the heart's joy as one of the choicest effects of the soul's union with God, took care to distinguish it from that disposition which seeks to promote laughter, and he recommended this noble poetic gravity as a defence against the darts of the demon. One who is profoundly versed in the character of the middle ages, might almost suppose that society had then been formed on the views of these later philosophers who say, that piety is extinguished in laughter, and that what men call laughter is nothing else but atheism pure: in corroboration of which opinion, the fact undoubtedly may be noticed, that it was always by a laughing generation, and men of Tyrrhian wit, that the Catholic religion was proscribed. Pause now for a moment, reader, before any of those old portraits. What a look is there! Do you not read “the soul's long thirst,” that sadness which Malebranche says is of itself always agreeable;† that train of thought, too, which is ascribed to Jacques by Shakspeare, when he speaks of “loving to cope him in those fits when he is full of matter?” Do you not read, in short, the desire of justice in that countenance which so nobly yokes a smiling with a sigh? May we not again to justice, to the deep sensibility of the middle age, trace that tragic dignity with which even the dwellings of men were then invested? Love and death had left many marks of their power and of their woe upon the wind-braving towers of the

ancestral mansion. You have only to visit any castle of the middle ages, to feel the force of this remark. Witness that of Blois, within the walls of which died Valentine of Milan; wife of Louis, Count of Blois; Philip of Orleans, their third son; Elizabeth of France, daughter of Charles VI., widow of Richard, king of England, and wife of Charles, Count of Blois; Pierre d'Amboise, bishop of Poitiers, brother of the cardinal; Laurent Bureau, confessor to Louis XII.; John de Garnai, chancellor of France under Louis XII.; Andrew Navagiero, ambassador of Venice; John of Orleans, of the poison given to him returning from the siege of la Rochelle; Antoine Bohier, cardinal archbishop of Bourges; Anne of Orleans, abbess of Fontevault; Charlotte, daughter of Francis I.; the queens Anne of Bretagne and Catherine de Medicis, and the illustrious princes of the house of Guise.*

I enumerate these instances to show how, in general, the houses of our ancestors were historical; for the king's palace had no privilege in this respect over the house of any private citizen or gentleman: and if all houses had this solemn aspect in consequence of their being alike ancestral and full of local domestic traditions, from what other cause can it have arisen but the principle of stability, and regard to paternal remembrances, which assuredly form a part of human justice, and which were so essentially characteristic of Catholic manners? Some long-loved secret marks, a cross, a letter scratched, connected with the memory of a revered parent, might be traced upon these portals. There was something on the face of these grey walls, which a beloved eye in former days had loved to watch; therefore the towers and pillars were suffered silently to clothe themselves in black, one after the other, like mourners that attended the procession to a grave. The moss-grown battlements seemed to proclaim, that of many successive lords the worm slept in the tomb, spinning there its thread round their humid crowns. At moments men felt a sudden awe at the kind of sepulchral gravity of their solemn gates. Each new generation asked, at intervals, why they wore such a brow amidst the banquet and the song—

“By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light
The masquers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.”

* Orderic Vital. Lib. V.

† Recherche de la vérité, Lib. III.

• Bernier Hist. de Blois, 22.

It was, as Michelet would say, that history was in them : ages weighed them down, and, as it were, the hereditary traditional experience of the world's woe. The material dwelling was thus a symbol of the mind of its inhabitants ; and can you question whether in that particular feature it did not partake of justice ? Look around you, and compare the men who preserve with those who destroy the paternal dwelling, and then judge. No, this opinion is not fanciful : the manners, and even the material monuments of the middle age have a mourning aspect ; but if we before proved that for man it was happy, we might here demonstrate that it was also strictly just to mourn.

With respect to the administration and government of families it should be observed that neither in the original law, nor in the spirit with which it was observed, was there wanting indication of a general and predominant sense of justice. According to the system of primogeniture, the eldest son was possessed rather than a possessor. Duties are imposed upon him : according to the strong expression of the middle ages "il faut qu'il serve son fief." It should be remembered that fiefs were originally given to men of arms, who were bound to defend the state. When citizens, who had nothing to do with arms, acquired fiefs, kings required that instead of the military service which was due from them, taxes should be raised on all such persons, and hence the exemption of nobles, and the obligation of those that were not noble, to pay taxes. When the military service ceased, rich men sought to obtain letters of nobility, founded on the antiquity of race,* and all the abuses followed, which before the French revolution had brought the feudal institutions into such contempt ; but an attentive and impartial consideration of their origin and principle, will go far to exculpate them from the charge of partiality and injustice. Nevertheless, Pasquier, while praising the law of primogeniture, calling it wholly Platonic, and observing that it has brought great profit to the kingdom of France, remarks, that it was not admitted under the first two races of their kings.† At all events, the general spirit of society, in consequence of the ecclesiastical influence, tended to remove whatever was unamiable or unessential in the domestic government, and in the privi-

leges conferred by legislation. Hugo de St. Victor proceeds farther than even the most sincere lover of justice would require. "Does nature," he asks, "thus divide the merits of children ? She bestows equally on all whence they can have the means of living. She herself teaches you, O parents, not to divide unequally your patrimony between them ; but you should grant to them all an equal inheritance."* There was a patriarchal dominion which, in the sweet spirit of Catholic manners, bound all members of a family together by the strongest and most loving ties. What a picture is that which Ambrose Leo gives of Gabriel Mastrilli, a senator of Nola, who was beloved by the clergy and people, whom he had seen in his eightieth year sitting at the head of his table, having seated before him eighty-one persons, all his children, or those sprung from them, whom he made a point of entertaining thus every year, insisting that they should all sit at one table, while he from the end might behold them with delight and gratitude. Among them were senators, knights, judges, priests, one of whom was a bishop, monks, physicians, merchants, and one hermit, Bernardine, who had renounced his profession of the law through a love of solitude.†

We have indeed only to open any chronicle of the middle ages, or even any chivalrous romance, to meet with some passage that cannot but charm by the insight which it furnishes into the domestic virtues of the ages of faith. It could not, in fact, have been otherwise, for these virtues were identical with faith. "That the social life is a life of wisdom, we," says St. Augustin, "hold even more than the philosophers ; for whence could this city of God find its beginning, or arrive at its appointed end, if it were not for the social life of the saints ?"‡

At one time the Church is obliged to defend her doctrine against heretics, who would abolish marriage, "*οἶκος μὲν γὰρ ἐκ γένους συνίσταται*," says Clemens Alexandrinus, "*πόλεις δὲ ἐξ οἴκων*." "Holy is the generation," he continues, "through which the world subsists, through which are natures, through which are angels, through which are powers, through which are souls, through which are the command-

* Hugo de St. Victor, Institut. Monasticæ de Bestiis et aliis Rebus, Lib. c. III. 35.

† Amb. Leonis, de Nola, Lib. III. Thesaur. Antiq. Italic. tom. IX.

‡ De Civitate Dei, Lib. XIX. 5.

* Pasquier Recherches de la France, Lib. II. 17.

† Id. Lib. II. c. 18.

ments, through which is the law, through which is the Gospel, through which is the knowledge of God. Without the body how could the economy of the Church respecting us be accomplished?"* It is an invincible truth, that whatever is anti-catholic, is also anti-social; and, indeed, the general idea arising from the Catholic doctrine of the sanctity of the marriage state, alone explains the secret of manners in the middle age. Confronted with the might and influence of licentious princes, it is here that the morality of the Catholic Church appears in all its grandeur, for the passions of bold and powerful men could make no permanent resistance to the ecclesiastical law, which spoke with the calm majesty of eternal justice.

"When Richard the First, duke of Normandy, four years before his death, desired that his second son, Robert, should be made Archbishop of Rouen, having signified his wish to the chapter of that church, he received for answer, that it was impossible to comply with his wishes, in consequence of the illegitimacy of his son's birth, since, by the canonical discipline, he was on that account incapable of being admitted even to orders, or of holding any benefice. This obstacle opened Richard's eyes, and made him discover in his conscience a sin, which the flattery of courtiers would have concealed from him. In order to repair the scandal, the duke and the mother presented themselves humbly in the church, and received the benediction of marriage."†

In Catholic times, men would not have spoken of the profane uses of common life, for they well knew, without having read the later philosophers, that common life also had a holiness of its own. St. Augustin says, "You praise God, when you are working in your own affairs; you praise God when you take food and drink; you praise him when you are resting in your bed; you praise him when you sleep."‡ "They also that were married," as Clemens Alexandrinus says, "were able to please God, and to give him thanks, thinking how they might be holy in body and spirit."§

The houses of our Catholic ancestors were not like the patrician halls of Rome, where everything was occult and treacherous, nothing frank or sincere. In a former book, I showed that feudal life was com-

patible with the manners of the blessed meek; and here, if we briefly investigate it in relation to the beatific thirst, we shall arrive at the conclusion that it was no less capable of being combined with justice, and with the most affectionate obedience to the whole law of God. "For in limine, there was nothing in the Christian discipline," as St. Clemens of Alexandria remarks, "which forbade men to be rich well *καλῶς πλουτεῖν*; but they were only forbidden to be rich unjustly and immeasurably."* The holy fathers show, not only that property is allowable, but that it is even necessary for the fulfilment of several divine precepts, such as those which command men to feed the hungry, and to make friends of the mammon of injustice, and they remark that Zaccheus, who received our Lord, was himself a son of Abraham.†

The political disputes which agitate modern society, had all been set at rest by the positive principles of religion during the middle ages. Giles of Colonna proves against Plato, that private possessions are of nature and utility,‡ and that property should not be equally divided among the citizens of a state, as Phaleas proposed.§ The blessed doctor shows that it would be contrary to nature, and impossible to render it equal by law; and that if it were possible, such an act would be injurious to the whole state, and to each citizen in particular, and destructive of virtue. He shows that the chief intention of a legislator ought to be, not the equalization of property, as Phaleas maintained, but the repression of concupiscence, which is the root of all evil;|| that although the thirst for possession is full of sin, and the best state and kingdom that in which the number of the middle rank is the greatest,¶ still diversity and inequality are essential to a happy society. "Maximam unitatem et æqualitatem," saith he, "non oportet querere in omnibus rebus: nam si omnia essent æqualia, jam non essent omnia." "As all goodness cannot be comprised in one species, so there must be admitted diversity in a state. Nor ought there to be that complete uniformity and equality which Socrates and Plato prescribed."** Judging only from these words, methinks the philosophers of the thirteenth century

* Stromat. Lib. III. c. 15. c. 17.

† Bernier, Hist. d'Evreux, 80.

‡ In Psalm. 146.

§ Stromat. Lib. III. 12.

* Stromat. c. 6.

† Clemens Alex. Lib. Quis dives Salvetur.

‡ De Regimine Princ. Lib. II. p. 111. c. 56.

§ Id. Lib. III. p. 1. c. 7. || III. 1. 18.

¶ III. 11. 33.

** III. 1. c. 8.

were not apprentices in political science. Leaving speculations, however, for practice, one might find subject for a book that would not be void of moral and poetic interest in the domestic manners of the ancient feudal families, such as the counts of Blois, that were at once warriors, poets, pilgrims, crusaders; or those of Champagne, who were encouragers of agriculture and commerce, while they were the patrons of poets, and the protectors of all that were unhappy. The constant residence of these families in their manorial houses, is a feature of the ancient society which should not be overlooked. Perfectly in the spirit of the middle ages, are those lines of *Æschylus*,

οὐκ αἶψά μιν εὖ χρὴ τὸν καλῶς εἰδαιμόνα
καὶ τὸν κακῶς πρᾶσσοντα καὶ τοῦτον μέναι.

and the line of Euripides might have been inscribed over the portal of many an ancestral dwelling, to denote the mind of its inhabitants.

Μακάριος ὅστις εὐτυχῶν οἶκος μένει.

To discover one advantage resulting from this custom, we have only to remember that hospitality in the middle ages was not a rivalry of vanity, or an account between debtor and creditor, but a religious duty. We discover the grounds of it in the canons. "The priests are to admonish the people," say the decrees, "never to refuse lodging to a wayfarer."* The difficulties of travelling in ancient times, before the road-making sons of Vulcan were abroad, *κελευτοποιοὶ παῖδες Ἡφαίστου*, as *Æschylus* terms them,† rendered this duty more important. St. Gregory of Tours, relates that a daughter of King Chilperic, going into Spain with a company, having travelled eight leagues from Paris, passed the night under a tent;‡ and Lupentius, abbot of St. Privatus, is mentioned to have pitched tents on his journey. Hospitality was a duty imposed on the poor as well as on the great. When St. Gregory used to hear of any rustic labourer who was eminent for the practice of hospitality, he assigned to him while he lived some of the church lands, and exempted him from all tribute.§ Great protection and encouragement must often have been derived by the

poor from the neighbourhood of a rich and well-tenanted house.

In the old charters of Berry, we read how John, founder of the chapel of Bourges, delivered the labourers from being compelled to work fifteen hours a day; and to abolish this cruelty, he ordered that no one should go to work before six o'clock, or continue at it later than six in the summer and five in the winter. These men of power could enforce what was required by the spirit of religion, and realize what was desired by Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*, where "he will have no man labour over hard, to be toiled out like a horse." The loyal servant who composed the joyous and recreative history of the triumph and prowess of the good knight, without fear and without reproach, the gentle Seigneur de Bayart, sums up his character in these words: "As far as relates to the Church, no one was ever found more obedient; in regard to nobility, no one was a better defender; and in relation to the condition of labourers, there never was a man more full of pity and zeal to render assistance."* To illustrate the deeds of these houses, was often a task voluntarily undertaken by religious communities. A book concerning Rudolph, count of Rhinsfeld, and his illustrious family, was written by the learned and pious Martin Gerbert, abbot of St. Blaise, in the Black Forest, and printed in that monastery.

Attention to the detail of a household, and the duty of maintaining it in conformity to the spirit of the Catholic Church, had been inculcated in an early age, by bishops and other ecclesiastical doctors. St. Clemens Alexandrinus had remarked that Plato reproved the life full of Italic and Syracusan tables, in which men were filled twice a day.† To sport with the seasons, to possess what no one else possesses, which is the noblest effort of a luxury that does not descend still lower to seek the glory of a disgusting singularity, entered not into the spirit of magnificence during the middle ages. The hospitality of the baronial hall, or of the princely houses of Italy haunted by the muses, was not designed to rival in its forms that of the court of Burgundy, when Charles the Bold had a banquet service of silver, to the value of fifty thousand marks.‡ In a spirit of noble simplicity, wooden or

* Ivon. Carnot. Decret. Pars VI. 25.

† Eumenid. 13. ‡ Lib. VI. c. 37.

§ Thomass. de Vet. et Nov. Eccles. discip. III. Lib. I. c. 19.

* La très joyeuse hyst. Prolog. XX.

† Pædagogus Lib. II. 1.

‡ La Marche Estat. de la Maison du duc de Bourgogne.

earthen vessels were often placed before the knightly or learned strangers, with as much confidence as, if one can judge by report, a successful speculator in trade of the present day displays before men like himself his golden buffette, enriched perhaps with the spoils of altars.

John Picus, count of Mirandula, gave most of his silver vessels and precious furniture to the poor, though his nephew Francis remarks, that he still preserved some few objects of the ancient splendour for his table, which was always, however, very moderately served.* Angelo Politian, inviting Marsilius Ficinus to visit him at his village of Caregia, at Fiesoli, adds, among other motives, that Picus frequently comes upon him suddenly from his oaks, and leads him out of his retreat to supper, which is always frugal like his own, but sweetened with learned and agreeable conversation.†

"The very word convivium," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Bernard Bembo, the Venetian, "shows that it does not consist in eating or drinking together, but in a sweet company; and as for numbers, I agree with Varro, that the guests should be never fewer than the Graces nor more than the nine Muses. No contentious person, or one who easily takes fire, should be admitted. If divine things be mentioned, men should speak with sobriety; but scientific subjects should not be introduced till the table has been removed. We should follow nature in conversation, for in the most exquisite flavours she mixes sweet with acid, lightness with solidity, and so our discourse should be composed of what is useful and of what is sweet. As for filth, it is far more detestable on the tongue than on the person. The rich and unctuous feast of Sardapalus we abhor, for this is to die together rather than to live together. Commori potius quam convivere. We seek an easy freedom, not a servile difficulty. If any one should be surprised at our attaching importance to conviviality, he should remember that not only all the great sages of ancient times practised it, but that Christ, the master of life, frequently assisted and wrought miracles at banquets, which are an occasion of reminding us that the true aliment of man is God."‡ Nor were such just views confined to philosophers. The wealth of

Uberto Spinula, to whose pacific virtues the Genoese owed more than to the labours of many heroes, was immense, yet nothing was ever found in his house but what bespoke the utmost moderation, and what would now be styled rusticity.* On every ground, how much better was it to resemble thus the old and elegant humanity of Greece, than the barbaric pride of a Hunish or Norwegian stateliness? The justice of our Catholic ancestors in all household discipline, would have found eloquent admirers in the writers of Greece and Rome. "I love the ancient state of Lacedæmon," says St Clemens Alexandrinus, "on account of its aversion for luxury.† I admire Plato," he says again, "for legislating against splendid furniture and for saying that one should never possess silver or gold, or any useless vessel, or such as was not required by necessary wants. The having much, ἡ πολυκτημοσύνη, should be taken away." Arguing against this domestic splendour of the ancient heathen civilization, he shows the absurdity of not having domestic utensils merely for use, in the same manner as the implements of husbandry and of other arts, which are never inlaid with ivory or gold. "Every thing," he says, "of this kind should be formed for use, not for pride and display; every object should be in harmony with the Christian institutes, and, as it were, a symbol of the happy life. Thus, let the device on rings be a dove, or a fish, or a ship in full sail, or a harp such as Polycrates used, or a ship's anchor. Diomedes," he observes, "used to sleep upon the hide of an ox for his couch, and Ulysses repaired the tottering of his bed with a stone. Such frugality and dexterity in self assistance were not only in private men, but also in the rulers of the ancient Greeks."‡ In the middle ages, there was not that multitude which is found at present of men whose whole lives are devoted to the support and transport of bodies, to provide for the luxury of the table, and of the equipage.

The rich, in the middle ages, whatever might have been their faults, were, at least, often men of active and simple habits, who would soon have decided in favour of the first of the alternatives, comprised in the words of Æschylus; ἀρβὺν ἢ κατρηφεῖν πόδα;§ they loved not to conceal their feet in a chariot.

* Vita ejus. † Politian Epist. Lib. IX.

‡ Marsil. Ficin. Epist. Lib. III.

* Uberti Folietæ clarorum Ligurum elogia.

† Pædagogus. Lib. II. c. 10.

‡ Id. Lib. II. c. 9.

§ Eumenid. 294.

"Nobles," says Giles of Colonna, "are industrious, and more active than other men, in consequence of their bodies being well trained, and rendered supple by exercise in youth; and also from the conversation and society of others; for having many observers they become men meditative, subtle investigators of what ought to be done, in order to be laudable."*

From this remark, it is clear that the thirteenth century beheld not that race of men who, like the Turks of high rank, are considered more or less of importance, in proportion as they make little use of their legs, and arms, voice, or understanding being surrounded with menials, to whom a sign is sufficient. The ancient nobility would say with Shakspeare,

"There be some sports are painful, but their labour
Delight in them sets off; some kinds of baseness
Are nobly undergone."†

Again, the justice of the ages of faith, being called into action, in all the domestic relations, the condition of servants became very different from what it must generally be, where the supernatural principles do not exist. The swineherd in the *Odyssey*, indeed says, that he could not be more favoured than in his old master's house, nor even if he were to return to the house of his father and mother, where he first lived, and who themselves nourished him.‡ But when these Homeric manners were united generally with the sentiments of Christian faith, the happy condition of domestics was not confined to a few favoured instances; the Church made express provision for securing it. "Let a lord, who hath a Christian servant, love him as a son, and as a brother on account of the communion of faith, though he be still his servant." This is what the constitutions called apostolical prescribe.§

"It is as much advantageous to the domestic," says Giles of Colonna, to "serve his master, as it is to the master to be served by his domestic. For the master supplies example and instruction to his servant, while his servant owes corporeal service to his master; and so essential to a house is authority, that the poor are obliged to have something in place of a servant, which can serve and obey them."|| "Even such writers as Cardan, were sen-

sible of this reciprocal obligation; and we find him, accordingly composing treatises on the manner in which masters of families should instruct their domestics.* In the work of Raban Maur, *De Institutione Clericorum*, it is said, that "Servants are to be admonished to regard the humility of their condition, and masters to be reminded that they are of the same nature with their servants. The one are to be admonished, that they may know themselves to be servants of their masters, and the other to be taught that they may know themselves to be fellow servants of their servants."† In like manner, John of Salisbury shows the respect and affection due to servants; that is, he adds, to our fellow servants;‡ and Marsilius Ficinus, writing to a prince of the Church, urges him to remember constantly that his servants are men, and in origin his equals, whom he should therefore, bind to himself by affection, and not by fear.§ "Do you know whence this poor domestic comes, who might have so much to suffer from your haughty humour? He returns to your house from the Divine banquet, where great and low are received alike. He returns, attended by the respect of angels; he carries within his bosom, the God who will be your judge." "Whoever observes closely," says Gerbet, "the character of Christian nations, will have no difficulty in distinguishing this secret, but continued action of faith, in the Real Presence. It is to this that we owe, at least, in part, one of the most beautiful traits of our manners, the dignity of domestics, of which the nations who have rejected unity, seem to have lost even the idea."||

On the other hand, the principles of faith, and the example of their masters, wrought such a revolution in the manners of servants, that no one could apply Homer's sentence to them any longer, and say, "that by the mere fact of their social condition, there was proof that they must, as men, have lost half their virtue." Orestes, in *Æschylus*, in laying his plan for taking his vengeance on *Ægistheus*, says, "that he and *Pylades*, like strangers, in a coarse and way-worn garb, will knock at the gate; and that the servants, as it is a villainous

* Hieron. Card. de *Libris Propriis*.

† Rabani Manri, *De Institutione Clericorum*, Lib. III. 37.

‡ De *Nugis Curialium*, Lib. VIII. cap. 13.

§ Epist. Lib. V.

|| Gerbet, *Considérations sur le dogme général de la piété Catholique*, 173.

* De *Regim. Princ.* IV. 1. 5.

† *Tempest.* III. 1. ‡ *Od.* XIV. 140.

§ *Lib.* IV. c. 11.

|| De *Regim. Prin.* Lib. II. P. III. c. 56.

house, will not receive them cheerfully, but will suffer them to stand there excluded, as they first stood, without the gates."* In modern times, to heroic youths, however noble in mien, if their appearance, in regard to dress, be such, every house will, in this respect, be the palace of Ægistheus; but during the feudal ages, the nobility of a family could be collected from the humility and courtesy of its domestics; who were more inclined to transgress justice, by an unwarranted liberty in the dispensation of all their master's bounty, than by insulting the poor, or the humble stranger, who presented himself as a guest. So eminent, indeed, was the justice of the Catholic manners, in relation to servants, that holy men affirmed, in consequence, that there was no condition happier than that of a servant, or more to be desired as favourable to salvation. It afforded a multitude of occasions for good, and very few for evil conduct. It was a state especially happy for those who desired to observe the two fundamental precepts of Christianity, humility and obedience.† A Florentine, who visited the desert of Camaldoli, might have recognised there in the person of brother Michael, a blessed hermit, the servant who had filled the goblet for him at the banquets of Lorenzo de Medici. This holy man had lived for many years with Lorenzo, at Florence, amongst his other domestics, discharging the office of butler; when, being attracted by the conversation of the learned and religious guests, who frequented the palace, he began to feel an ardour for instruction, and procured himself books. He used to listen with infinite delight, to the long conversations held at his master's table by the illustrious men who sat there, discoursing on the hopes of heavenly good, and on true Christian charity; so that afterwards, when he attended Lorenzo to the chase, through the deep woods of the Trebian Villa, on the mountain of Senarius, he called to mind the warning of the Marquis Guido, when one night, deserted in a similar place by his companions, he was admonished by a horrible vision, to amend his life, so that he afterwards built seven monasteries. All this so moved him, that his wishes became known, and Lorenzo enabled him to embrace the ecclesiastical state. Subsequently, having accompanied Lorenzo on his visit to the sacred desert of Camaldoli, he was so pleased with all he witnessed there, that

he finally became a hermit, and there closed a life of great innocence and sanctity, in that Divine solitude.* Many similar instances might be found in the middle ages. Cardinal Cibo, whose servant, Lewis Stefanello died at Rome in the odour of sanctity, addressed a most affecting discourse to his domestics, which is still extant. He treated them as his children, and his house became a model of order and piety. Gobet, styled Saint Lewis, who was a servant, composed a book of instruction for persons of his condition, which is most remarkable for the piety and excellence of its rules, as well as for the amusing simplicity of the style. "The advice doth not please me," says Montaigne, "to speak always in the language of a master to one's servants, without play, without familiarity. It is inhuman and unjust, to set so great a value upon such and such prerogatives of fortune; and the discipline in which there is the least apparent disparity between servants and masters, seems to me to be the most equitable." Christine de Pisan says, "that king Charles V. often discovered the destructive courses taken by some of his servants, and knew of others, who followed various ways of perdition, as frequenting taverns, and bad company, houses of gambling, and other dissolutions; but the gentle king, who, after the example of Jesus Christ, preferred recalling and correcting his people by sweetness, to adopting a method of severity, used to give them advice courteously, and admonish them; and by his kindness, used to lead them back to the right road."†

Petrarch loved his poor fisherman at Vaucluse, and speaks affectingly of his death, in a letter to the two Cardinals of Tailleurand, and Bologna. "Yesterday, I lost the guardian of my retreat; he was not unknown to you; he cultivated for me a few acres of very bad land. That rustic man, whom I can never lament as he deserves, had more prudence, and even urbanity, than is often to be found in cities; and besides this, he was the most faithful creature that the earth ever produced; to him I confided my books, and all that was most dear to me. I was absent three years from Vaucluse; at my return, nothing was wanting, not a single thing displaced. He could not read, but he loved letters. When I gave a book to his care, he expressed great joy, and pressed it to his breast with

* Æschyl. Chœphoræ.

† Les Domestiques Chrétiens, Paris.

* Annales Camaldulens. LXXI.

† Vie du sage Roi, chap. 25.

a sigh; sometimes he named the author in a whisper. I have spent fifteen years with him, and confided to him my most secret thoughts; and his breast was to me a temple of faith and love. He died yesterday, asking continually for me, and calling upon God. His death affects me extremely."

In the cemetery of St. Nicholas, in the town of St. Maur-des-Fossés, Lebeuf describes the tomb of a servant which had been erected by his master, in testimony of the love which he bore to him.* In fact, many servants of the middle ages, in consequence of their fidelity, have become historic personages, as Guillaume Babouin, who afforded such consolation to his master, John, the fifth duke of Brittany, when in the barbarous hands of the Count de Pen-thièvre, by contriving to speak to him, and give him money, on his various removals from prison to prison.† The Spanish nobles used to keep in their pay, not only their own superannuated servants, and their families, but also those of their fathers, and those of the house which came to them by inheritance. The duke of Arcos, who died in 1780, entertained thus 3000 persons. Notwithstanding this magnificence, clothed with the veil of charity, which is complained of by the modern sophists, there are, as Bourgoign remarks, "fewer great houses ruined in Spain, than in any other country." The simplicity of their manners, their little taste for an habitual ostentation, the rareness of sumptuous repasts, serve as safeguards to their finances; though, when occasion requires, they are surpassed in splendour by the potentates of no country. The ambition of great families tended not to the corruption, but to the ornament of the state; as may be witnessed in those vast towers of Bologna of which one, the family of the Asinelli, the other that of the Garisendi, built in rivalry of each other's houses, which conjoined;‡ to which a similar instance is found at Ravenna, where the towers of Pusterula and Alidosia were so called, from the noble families of those names, to whose houses they were attached.§

What Pericles said in praise of the Athenians, might, in general, be justly applied to the men of the middle ages; "they had taste with simplicity."|| Magnificence was reserved for extraordinary occasions;

and then used in honour of religion, as when the Roman ladies put on their diamonds only on the great festivals. Generally, the ancient idea of splendour had nothing in common with the spirit of an age, which can form no conception of any thing important without show and costliness in the materials. From the public festivities, of which we find the details in history, we can infer what was the kind of magnificence which distinguished, more or less, the houses of the great, on occasions of domestic rejoicing; for it was the same taste which presided over both. Witness, then, the description of the entry of king Henry II. into Lyons, which is so minutely described by Paradin. "Here we behold, indeed, almost incredible splendour; but it is not a mere barbarous display of abused riches. What chiefly excites admiration in the beholders, are things which remind no one of the orphan's tear, or the hunger of the poor; they are spiritual emblems, the symbolic imagery, the noble inscriptions, the spectacle of natural loveliness, or of youthful dexterity and strength, the wreaths of flowers, the fair troop of comely pages, representing the successive stages of youth, from childhood to maturity, the heroic and inspiring games."*

We have seen elsewhere, how conformable to these principles, which belong to justice, was the whole internal economy of life with our Catholic ancestors. The most sumptuous castle of a feudal baron, would be now deemed not a fitting residence for one of our bankers. We read, indeed, of the "false forest of a well-hung room," and we can still, in many houses, mark the lesson on the carved panels, as in the hotel of Cluny, at Paris, where the credo in action is represented by imagery, showing the grounds of faith, from the creation of the world till its consummation in the celestial Jerusalem, of which two angels record the beatitudes; but we find not those closets of a splendour merely luxurious, which provoked the indignation of Boyle, who observes, that the "apostle who discountenanced women's wearing of gold, or precious things upon their bodies, would sure have opposed their having more sumptuous ornaments upon their walls." If our ancestors could hear their descendants complaining of their not having understood the art of comfort, that poor Scipio knew not how to live, they might, perhaps, make a prophet's reply, "væ qui

* Tom. V. 163.

† Lobineau, Hist. de Bret. Lib. IX.

‡ Dulcini de var. Bononiæ statu, Lib. III.

§ Desid. Spreti de origine urbis Raven. Lib. I. Thesaur. Antiq. Ital.

|| Thucyd. Lib. II. 40.

* Hist. de Lyon, Liv. III. c. 27.

consuunt pulvillos sub omni eubito manus, et faciunt cervicalia sub capite universæ ætatis.* Ferdinand IV. of Spain, was educated by his holy mother, Maria, in such poverty, that in order to give to the poor, and to build churches, and to resist the infidels, they had no silver vessels on their table, but only wooden, and earthen.† When king Alphonso had recovered Toledo from the Moors, perceiving that the manners of the people had become soft and effeminate, through intercourse with the infidels, he took away the baths of Toledo, and all the provisions for pleasure, which the Moors had established there; and so endeavoured to recall the people to their ancient virtue and severity.‡ Modern historians would only conclude from this fact, that the Moors possessed the advantages of a high civilization, and the Catholic king, the rudeness of a barbarous race; but so would not have thought Tacitus, who censures the baths, and sumptuous banquets which the Britons had learned to use from the Romans, adding, “idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur cum pars servitutis esset.”§

When Thomas Egeworth entered Rocherrieu, after the battle, he found his prisoner, Charles of Blois, placed on a bed, having received eighteen wounds. Exasperated at his refusal, in such a state, to deliver himself to him, he commanded that the bed should be removed, and straw substituted. Charles felt the advantage, at that moment, of having been educated as a Catholic prince. Giving thanks to God, he declared that it was the same to him, and he vowed that in future he would never again lie couched upon luxurious plumes.||

Who is not astonished, on reading of the magnificent and pious works of Cosmo de Medicis? “How many Churches and monasteries hath he built and repaired?” says Benedict Aretino. “With what beautiful edifices hath he adorned our city? No man ever before supported so many poor people as he hath, with his own riches. And it can scarcely be told with what parsimony and religion he governs his own house. It is worth while to see him and his virtuous sons, walk through the streets without pomp, without servants, and simply

clad; so that strangers would suppose they were common men.”*

“The ancients,” says Huber, “are praised for having confined their magnificence to the temples of religion, while their own dwellings were but miserable huts. This is still more or less the case in Spain. The dwelling-house, the whole system of private life, bespeak poverty. The churches, convents, hospitals, and palaces of justice are superb; an unquestionable proof of barbarism,” he adds, ironically, “according to our views of civilization.”†

With some men, it is sufficient to read that article of provision, in the charter of privilege, granted to the Seigneur of Sassey, which declares that his right of lodging comprises stables for his horses, and perches for his birds;‡ or to see on the walls of the Castle of Blois, the figure of a hind, carved there by order of Louis XII. to commemorate an animal, which had been taken in the forest, whose history in verse is inscribed below the figure, to feel impelled to declaim against the interminable and destructive amusements of the feudal nobility, as legitimate ground for denying the existence of domestic justice, during the middle ages: but on such occasions, it should be remembered, that if the practice were often defective, it was not so with regard to principles, which agreed with those of Aristotle and Anacharsis, who say, “that to take pains, and to labour for the sake of play, was silly and too boyish; but that to play in order to take pains and labour, was just and right.”§ Not to remain on ground which we have before gone over, it may be only observed here, that the writers of the middle age were even more severe against hunters than seem tolerable, if we did not bear in mind, what was the sense of justice continually in their minds. According to their reading, men are hunters, not before, but against the Lord, according to the sense attached to the word *εὐαρίων*, by St. Augustin.||

“Men see a hunter, and are delighted,” says Ives de Chartres. “Woe to them wretched,” he adds, “if they be not corrected.” “Qui enim vident venatorem et delectantur, videbunt Salvatore et contristabuntur,”¶ words which might excite surprise, if we did not remember the hunt-

* Ezech. XIII.

† Roderici Sancti Hist. Hispanic. Pars IV. c. 8.

‡ Lucii Marinei Siculi de Reb. Hispanicæ, Lib. VII.

§ De vita Agricolæ.

|| Lobineau Hist. de Bret. VII.

* De præstantia Virorum sui ævi Dialog.

† Skizzen aus. Spanien. XXIII.

‡ Hist. d'Evreux.

§ Ethic. Nicom. Lib. 10. c. 6.

|| De Civitate Dei, Lib. XVI. 4.

¶ Ivonis Carnot. Decret. Pars XIII. 32.

ing of such men, as the tyrant Eccelino, that enemy of the human race,* and James of Sant Andrea, whom Dante found in hell, among the prodigal, who set fire to a cottage in order to warm himself and his friends, after hunting on a cold winter's day, and then gave three acres of land, and money sufficient to build three houses to the peasant whom he had injured.† Grievous and loud were the complaints of the clergy, on the subject of those "*qui propter venationes et amorem canum causam pauperum negligunt.*"‡ Frequently, however, they found an echo in the knightly breast.

There are the charters of the counts and countesses of Blois, declaring, as in that dated in the year 1298, that for the remedy of their souls and of those of their fathers, and desiring to provide for the good of the country, they will keep no game, excepting within certain determined woods, and that whatever animal is found without those parts, whether stag or boar, or hare, or whatever sort of beast or wild bird, may be hunted and killed by any one, whether he be noble or not noble, without being called to give any account. The inhabitants of the country may take these beasts or birds, either with dogs or traps, or in whatever manner they like, and at whatever hour of the day or night they may choose.§ A count of Spanheim, in 1454, might have been seen feeding daily thirty poor men at his table, for the soul of his father, Count Walram, who lay buried in the church of Spanheim, whose punishment after death, for having injured the property of the peasants in the hunting, which was his sole pleasure, had been revealed to Godrid the chaplain, as he walked by night across the plain between Winterberg and Pferdfeld, by sounds and visions from the forest, so dreadful that he never smiled again.||

In a former book, some excuse was offered for the passion which men of the middle ages evinced for the chase. Many of the old popular sayings, show that the condition of the country rendered it in some sense a service of public utility. Pasquier cites many such, as "when one

speaks of the wolf, one sees the trace;" "go not to the woods when the wolves eat one another;" "necessity drives the wolf from the woods;" "while the dog cries the wolf flies;" "he who makes himself a lamb, the wolf will devour him;" "the hour between dog and wolf," to denote twilight, when a wolf might be mistaken for a dog.*

St. Hubert gave a kind of sanctity to the chase of forests, and it cannot be denied but that the exercises of the declining year, leading men to consort with the solemn beauties of mourning nature, must have had a beneficial influence on the mind. Many fine moral instructions would have been lost, methinks, to men who had not known what it was to hold lonely converse with the withered fern and ragged furze stretched o'er the stony heath, to mark all the changes on the mountain's side which give note of the declining year, to see the falling leaves blown wildly across their path, to tread the thick strewn glades, and to traverse the watery rushy wastes, hearing amidst the lurid gleam of nocturnal exhalations, the lengthened notes of the northern birds who sing there, as Olaus Magnus supposes, through cold and hunger.† It is an historical fact, that many hunters of the middle ages ascribed their conversion to an early familiarity with the woods, to their habit of wandering amidst twilight groves and solemn wastes, when the leaf incessant rustled, slowly circling through the air, or descending in wild showers from the boughs before the rising storm; but whatever may be thought of the passion which our feudal ancestors evinced for the chase, I know not on what ground their descendants can presume to criticize and condemn them.

Round their Cyclopan hearths,‡ within the sea-washed tower, or the dusky hall, deep in forest wilds, the long narrations of the hunter to companions, who

"Hear, half asleep, the rising storm
Hurling the hail and sleeted rain
Against the casement's tinkling pane,"

may perhaps indicate, in the estimation of some persons, a state of society truly barbarous. Certainly, our ancestors, like Virgil's husbandmen, enjoyed the winter's tale.

* Chronic. Rolandini IX. 14.

† Bernardini Scardeonii hist. Patavinæ, Lib. III. 13.

‡ Ionnæ Aurelianensis, Episcop. de Institut. Laicali, Lib. II. cap. 23. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. I.

§ Bernier Hist. de Blois, Preuves XXVIII.

|| Chronic. Hirsangiens.

* Pasquier Recherches de la Franc. Lib. VIII. 15.

† Olai Magni Hist. Septent. gent. Lib. XIX. 7.
‡ Iph. in Taur. 836.

"Mutuaque inter se læti convivia curant,
Invitat genialis hiems, curaque resolvit."*

It is amusing to read of the strange knight in the forest, who wishes to force his story upon Gyron le Courtois, who only consents to listen to it, to prevent the other from engaging in a mortal combat with him on the spot. The ὕμνον θαυραπός, of which Pindar speaks, might have been found in every feudal tower, where undoubtedly discourse in general was more wild, youthful and credulous, than would suit the formal sagacity which resides within our luxurious cottages; but, let it be remembered, that the odious vices of the conversations which the principles of faith do not guide, were not found so frequently there. Our ancestors had been made familiar with the saying of St. Jerome, who, condemning detraction, says, that "we should love the houses of all Christians as our own."† Religion's voice had determined not only the doctrines of intelligence, but also the details of practice. It is recorded in the epitaph on the tomb of Claude Albert d'Arbois, seigneur de Romeny, which is in the church of Lusarches, in the diocese of Paris, a hero renowned for his probity and valour, that his hatred for calumnious remarks was carried so far, that he was styled at court, "The protector of the absent."‡ Their very recreations were known to be a part of justice. "Not every pleasant is an idle word," says Giles of Colonna; "for an idle word is that which wants a due end, but recreation is liberal and necessary; therefore, words tending to it, have a due end and are not idle, for as sleep is necessary for the wearied body, so is play for the fatigued mind."§ A stranger and guest did not enter a feudal hall with the certainty of being received with distasteful looks and cold-moving nods that would freeze him into silence.

It is related of Schiller that, in society, the strict ceremonial cramped the play of his mind. "Hemmed in," says the writer of his life, "as by invisible fences, among the intricate barriers of etiquette, so feeble, so inviolable, he felt constrained and helpless; alternately chagrined and indignant." Now this evil, which every one above the vulgar must experience more or less, was wholly excluded from the society of the

middle ages; for manners were then playful, unreserved and free. Men did not, indeed, set open their gates to the invaders of most of their time; they were hospitable, but they did not, as Cowley says, "expose their lives to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, which make a wise man tremble to think of." We have only to examine the division and structure of their habitations, to see how they had means at least afforded to them, between their massive walls, for that solitary and silent meditation on the divine law, which, in the divine scriptures, is synonymous with justice.

It may be remarked in history, that when the head of the house was unworthy, there is generally incidental, and often direct evidence of the redeeming qualities of its other members. There is no name associated with shame or terror, which the virtues of women have not in some way or other rescued from unmingled aversion. Among the poor Clares in the convent of Majorca, in the year 1260, you would have found a sister, Magdelin Bonaparte, renouncing even the legitimate pleasures of the world, to serve God with perfect, undivided love.*

If the old chronicles of Switzerland describe the crimes of the seigneurs of Sargans and of Watz, chiefs of a powerful family in the Rhetian Alps, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, who used to make war against the abbots of St. Gall, they do not leave us in ignorance of the virtues of the women of that noble house, which were enough to have rendered its name immortal.

Listen, now, to a simple tale of the 13th century, which is recorded in the annals of the Franciscan order. Two friars of Paris, travelling in the depth of winter, came at the first hour of the night, fatigued, covered with mud, and wet with rain, to the gate of a house where they hoped to receive hospitality, not knowing that it belonged to a knight who hated all friars, and who for twenty years had never made his confession. The mother of the family replied to their petition, "I know not, good fathers, what to do. If I admit you under our roof, I fear my husband; and if I send you away cruelly in this tempestuous night, I shall dread the indignation of God. Enter, and hide yourselves till my husband returns from hunting, and has supped, for then I shall be able to supply you secretly with what is needful." Shortly

* Georg. I. 301.

† Epist. XXXIV.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. IV. 326.

§ De Regim. Princip. II. 1. 30.

* Wadding Annal. Minorum.

the husband returns, sups joyfully, but perceiving that his wife is sad, desires to know the cause. She replies that she dares not disclose it. Pressed and encouraged, she at length relates what has happened, adding, that she fears God's judgment, seeing that his servants are afflicted with cold and hunger, while they are feasting at their ease. The knight becoming more gentle, orders them to be led forth from their hiding-place, and to be supplied with food. The poor friars came forth, and draw near the fire, and when he sees their emaciated faces, humid raiment, and their feet stained with blood, the hand of the Lord is upon him, and from a lion he becomes a lamb; with his own hands he washes their feet, places the table, and prepares their beds, bringing in fresh straw. After the supper, with altered look and tone, he addresses the elder friar, and asks whether a shameless sinner, who hath not confessed since many years, can hope for pardon from God? "Yea, in sooth," replied the friar, "hope in the Lord, and do good, and he will deal with thee according to his mercy; for, in whatever day the sinner repents, he will remember his iniquity no more." The contrite host declares that he will not then defer any longer approaching the sacraments. "This very night," saith he, "I will unburden my conscience, lest my soul should be required of me." The friar, however, little suspecting danger of death, advised him to wait till morning. All retired to rest, but during the night, the friar became alarmed, rose, prostrated himself on the earth, and besought God to spare the sinner. In the morning, however, the master of the house was found dead. The man of God, judging from what had passed, consoled the widow, declared that in his dreams he had been assured of the salvation of her husband; and the man was buried honourably, bells were tolled, and mass was sung, and the friars departed on their way.*

It is to instances of this kind that St. Jerome alludes in his beautiful epistle to Læta, where he says, "A holy and faithful family must needs sanctify its infidel chief. That man cannot be far from entering upon the career of faith, who is surrounded by sons and grandsons enlightened by the faith. For my part, I think that Jupiter himself, if he had lived in the midst of such relations, could not have been

prevented from believing in Jesus Christ. Let your illustrious father, if he pleaseth, turn my letter to ridicule; let him tax me with folly. He will do nothing but what his son-in-law did also, some time before his conversion. Christians are not formed by birth, but by grace."*

We meet with frequent instances in the history of the middle ages of whole families being composed of saints, for even among persons who had not formally retired into cloisters, the perfect life was often found. "O happy house," cries St. Jerome, writing to Chromatius and Eusebius, brothers, who lived with their friend Jovinus, and their mother and sisters, who were nuns, all under one roof; "O happy house, in which dwell Anna the widow, virgins, prophetesses, and two Samuels nourished in the temple."†

"At Dijon," says St. Gregory of Tours, "there was a certain senator by name Hilary, who had a wife and many sons, who maintained his house in such chastity and purity, that men beheld there the fulfilment of what the apostle says, 'Honorable connubium et thorus immaculatus.' Master and servants, all shone with equal purity. So he died. Who and what he was, according to the dignity of the world, may be seen at this day on his immense tomb, which is of marble sculptured."‡

Under the roof of Alphonso de Cepede and Beatrice d'Ahumade, the parents of St. Theresa, each member of that numerous household of children and servants endeavoured to give the rest an example of perfect piety. That certain image of sincerity and love of truth which, in the estimation of Muratori, so amply compensated for the inelegant style of Donizo, whom he grants may be called a barbarous and iron writer, appears in no part of his metrical Life of Mathilda more strikingly than in the verses which describe the dukes of Tuscany and Spoleto as brave Catholic men begetting Catholic sons.

*Justitie palmam gestabant semper et arma
Temporibus quorum vixit pax ordoque morum,
Catholici fortes genuerunt Catholicosque.
Clavigeri Petri normam sancti quoque cleri
Semper amaverunt, coluerunt, et timuerunt,
Ex propriis rebus sanctis hi multa dederunt
Escar, et vestes miseris tribuere libenter.*§

What families were those which produced St. Bernard and St. Benedict!

* S. Hieron. Epist. ad Lætam.

† Epist. VII.

‡ De gloria Confessorum, 43.

§ Lib. I. cap. I. Rer. Ital. Script. tom. V.

* Wadding Ann. Minorum, tom. V. an. 1281.

What sweet and wide-spreading influences of saintly affections must have existed between their different members! What dialogues between a brother and a sister—a Benedict and a Scolastica! Mystic conversations approved of heaven, canonized in the tempest of that awful night which heard the last of them, and which from the memory of man shall never perish! What holy families are brought to light by the annals of the Franciscans alone, which incidentally speak of the relations of different members of that order! St. Clare had a mother, Hortulana, and two sisters, the blessed Agnes and Beatrice, who all followed her example. The blessed king, Boleslaus, the chaste, had a mother, the blessed Grimislava, and a sister, the blessed Salomea, and for his wife the blessed Cunegond, who had two sisters, the blessed Constance, Duchess of Russia and the blessed Jolenta, who, after the death of her husband Boleslaus, the pious Duke of Calissa, gave all she had to the poor, and retired into the convent of Clares, which he had founded. What roots of living virtue are here spreading far and wide! Ezelinus, Count Palatine of the Rhine, brother of St. Cunegond, and of Theodoric, Bishop of Metz, whom the Emperor Henry, unable to conquer by force of arms, subdued by kindness, had ten children, of whom all but one son and one daughter, who remained with great honour in the world, became eminent in religion, two as archbishops, and six as abbesses.*

There are few historical works of the middle ages which do not furnish similar instances. Hangericus was an illustrious man, major domo to Theodoric, King of the Burgundians. He had four children by his wife, Leodegunda: St. Pharo, at first a soldier, then a clerk, then a monk in Resbach, and lastly bishop of Meaux; St. Canoaldus, his brother, from a child was a monk in Luxeuil, under father Columban, and afterwards became a bishop. St. Phara, their sister, consecrated her virginity to God; and their brother, Count St. Walbert, who inherited the paternal possessions, and who used often to repair to the blessed Bertin, at St. Omer, to hear the word of God, and to receive his blessing, at length renounced the world, and became a monk at Luxeuil, and upon the death of his brother, the blessed Pharo, succeeded him in the see of Meaux; his son again, St. Bertin, lived a holy life at

St. Omer, under the holy Bertin, who had baptized him, and made a blessed end.*

The family of queen St. Etheldrite, abbess of Ely, furnishes an instance from our annals, for her father, king Anna, was of eminent justice, making himself equal to his servants through humility, lowly to priests, grateful to the people, devout to God, the father of orphans, the judge of widows, and the brave defender of his country, whose sepulchre was revered as that of a saint; and her mother, Here-swetha, who was the sister of St. Hilda, shone in the glory of sanctity; of her two brothers, Jurminus was a blessed man, and her three sisters, for the love of Jesus Christ, deserved to have oil in their lamps among the prudent, one of whom, Sexburga, succeeded her as Abbess of Ely.† In the twelfth century, we find a Wido, Count of Matiscon, with his wife, sons, and daughters, and also thirty soldiers, probably of his household, coming to Cluni, where they all embrace a religious life.‡ In the eleventh century, Seliger Von Wollhausen was a valiant knight and renowned warrior. In his beloved and pious wife, Hedwig, and in his three sons, with his ample fortune and high renown, he possessed all means of earthly happiness. But the holy Church, he thought, required his services; he renounced the world, its joys, and its honours, and retired to the monks of Einsiedelen, his three sons following him, and his wife taking the veil in the convent of our Lady, at Zurich.§ Here could have been no sudden change, and therefore one can estimate what must have been the interior life of these families during previous times. Bruno the Benedictine, one of the apostles of Prussia, in the tenth century, was the son of the illustrious Baron of Querfurt, who was renowned among his contemporaries, and beloved by all men. The sequel throws light upon the character of that house, for when the news arrived at the baron's castle of the son's martyrdom in Prussia, whither he had gone to preach the Gospel to the heathen, the excellent father was in such a state of mind that he could instantly carry into effect a resolution which he had long been forming, and retire into a monastery for the remainder of his days. In the year

* Chronicon. Monasterii S. Bertini, cap. 1. Pars X. apud Marten. Thesaur. anecdotorum, tom. III.

† Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Bened. tom. II.

‡ Chronicum Cluniacens.

§ Tschudi Einsiedliche Chronik, 40.

• Annal Hirsaugiensis.

1187 died that most illustrious and religious man, Peter Acotantus, patrician and senator of Venice, whose sanctity under the secular habit, attested by miracles, rendered glorious the church of St. Basil in that city, where his limbs were laid to rest. It was his brother of the same name who, despising the dignity and pleasures of the world, withdrew to the desert of Camaldoli.* Thus you have one brother reaping eternal glory as a senator, and another as a hermit. The great patrician family of the Ajutamichristo was illustrious at Pisa, in the thirteenth century. This could boast, at the same time, of a blessed Bartholomew, in the monastery of St. Frigidianus, of Frederic and Guido, either brothers or nephews of this saint, who evince their piety, by building the choir of the Dominican church of St. Catherine, at Pisa, and of blessed Thomas, son of Bernard, who despising the honours and riches of his family, embraced the order of St. Dominic, and died in the house of St. John and St. Paul, at Venice.†

In the year 1239, Albertinus resolves to pass the remainder of his life in the monastery of St. Just and St. Clement, in Volaterra, where his son, the blessed James de Certaldo, was professed. In 1281, Ingeramius de Certaldo follows his father and brother, and becomes a monk in the same house.‡ Hermolao Donato, a Venetian senator, and Marina Lauretana, his wife, were blessed in the number of their saintly children. This was the illustrious man of whom Ambrosius Camadulensis speaks, who was ambassador from Venice at the council of Basle, and whose foul murder is attested on the sepulchre in the cloister of the monastery of St. Michael de Muriano, as having been perpetrated in the year 1450, by an impious hand, and suffered in the cause of justice, while he magnanimously forgave. Of their ten children, four only remained in the world, the rest left all for God. Four saintly sisters took the veil in the Benedictine convent of St. Servulus. Peter, whose portrait at full length by Tintoretto, is in the monastery of St. Michael de Muriano, of which he built the church, became the abbot of that house, distinguished by his admirable genius, learning, and sanctity. Lewis, who is praised by Leonard Justiniani, as a sublime philosopher, and most

learned, was also a monk; and Thomas, another devout religious man, became patriarch of Venice in the year 1505.* In fact, examples of this kind are innumerable. Let us pass on.

The ages of faith in relation to the graces of the female character, might well fix the attention of all who have minds capable of being arrested by the delicate and sublime themes which belong to gentle studies. At the first, chastity, modesty, obedience, attention to domestic studies, and other virtues, made Christian women dear to their pagan husbands, and even gave these men a reverence for the divine philosophy in which they had been educated, so that they used to exclaim with Libanius, "Proh, quales feminas habent Christiani!" Moral writers appeal to this fact in developing the proofs of the divinity of the Christian religion, and historians supply the same evidence in uninterrupted succession, through all subsequent times. Whether there be slight shades of difference observable in different periods, we need not examine. One thing is certain, that upon the women of the middle ages the imagination might for ever dwell with peaceful and salutary delight. The striking opposition of figures in regard to the female character, which the life of faith has created, is well represented by the author of the Martyrs. "An astonishing contrast," saith he, "was observable on all sides. The daughters of Lacedemon, still attached to their gods, appeared on the roads with their tunics half open, their free and bold manner, their confident looks, with such they used to dance at the festivals of Bacchus or of Hyacinth. Further on you discovered the Christian virgins chastely dressed, worthy daughters of Helen by their beauty, and more beautiful than their mother by their modesty. They were going with the rest of the faithful to celebrate the mysteries of a worship which renders the heart gentle for the child, charitable for the slave, humble for the poor, pure and holy for the young. It seemed as if one beheld two different nations, so great a change can religion produce in human breasts."† Who has not experienced impressions somewhat similar in lands where the children of the pacific fold were but few amidst a multitude? Are we to ascribe the contrast, as we are told, to the defect of education in some, and to the high instruction or nobility

* Annal. Camaldulens. Lib. XXXIV.

† Id. Lib. XXXVIII.

‡ Id. XXXIX.

* Annal. Camaldulens. Lib. LXVII.

† Les Martyrs, XIV.

of others? That this cannot be the true solution, is evident; for under circumstances of the same variety in other countries, the same effects are not discernible. The cause must lie deeper, and without doubt the phenomenon arises from the fact, that the latter are left to the fluctuating tastes of a civilization purely human and natural, while the former, for whom 'twixt beautiful and good I cannot say which name was fitter, are daughters of the Catholic Church—the women of the middle ages—the women of the primitive ages—the daughters of Jerusalem who ministered to our divine Lord, and who followed his apostles with such fervour and constancy—the women of faith, transformed, and, as it were, new created. How strange to find men of the greatest genius, and of the most extensive learning in modern times, ignorant apparently of the existence of this mystic being. "Men," saith Goëthe, "must strive after some distant good, and that with violent efforts. Men must labour for eternity; whereas women are content with possessing on this earth a simple, near, and limited good, which they wish might always remain stationary with them."* Had this illustrious philosopher, then, never heard the hymn of Jesu corona virginum, attesting so sweet a page in the history of the human mind; or, without waiting for the voice of the Church and the testimony of historians, had he never met with any of the daughters of Jerusalem whom God anoints with the oil of gladness, on account of truth, and meekness, and justice? One glance at the portrait of a St. Theresa, or of a St. Elizabeth, would be sufficient to dispel for ever such conceptions of the female heart. In the first of these illustrious women, how completely did the cloister swallow up all fond memory of former things—beauty, dress, feasts, evening conversations under orange trees, and Moorish songs, and the sound of the mandoline, and all that had adorned love in the eyes of a beautiful Spanish girl, nourished with the reading of the romancers! Love alone remained, more ardent since it had become purer, more profound since it had become more divine. For a while, it is true, this great soul struggled against the remembrance of the world. Ten years did not suffice to detach from the earth the heart that was not made for it: but how effectual was the ardour of its thirst

* Goëthe Torquato Tasso.

when the true and living streams of that justice which it had so long sought for in vain, were at length yielded to it from the fountains of heaven!

In the preceding book, we had occasion to remark the intense affection evinced by women for the devotions and offices of the Catholic Church, and the desire after something more than "a near and limited good," which prompted them to seek unceasing sustenance in the exercise of divine worship. It might have been shown, for the same object that women used to make long pilgrimages. The holy Dorothea went from Montau, in Pomerania, to Rome, for the jubilee, in the year 1390, as did also queen Margaret, out of Denmark.* Queen Isabella of Spain used to recite her office, like a nun. She seemed to lead a contemplative life amidst all her cares, and the splendour of her chapel was celebrated throughout the kingdom.† Donizo says, that "the countess Mathilda surpassed even priests in the love of Christ—

*'Ista sacerdotes de Christi vincit amore,
Tempore nocturno studiosius atque diurno
Est sacris Psalmis, ac officiis venerandis
Religione pia, satis hæc intenta perita.
Hærent semper ei sapientes maxime cleri
Vestibus et vasis pretiosis rite sacratis.'*"

The account of her last days still proclaims her unsated thirst. In the Bonden village she resolved to assist at the office on Christmas night, which was sung by father Ponzo, Abbot of Cluni. The immense cold at first so afflicted her aged limbs, that she returned sick to her bed. At day-break, though languid, she again heard mass, after which she gave the abbot, on his departure, sacred vestments, and silver vessels, and a holy cross adorned with gems. Similarly she celebrated the feast of the Epiphany; but when the season came in which Jesus fasted, she, though weak, desired to fast also for his love. The priests, however, prohibited her, and prescribed that she should only give abundant alms. Being confined to her bed during seven months, a small church under the invocation of St. James and Zebedee, was constructed by her orders before the house in which she lay, to which she gave lands and vestments, and there, while lying on her bed she continued to hear mass, that whom she served living,

• Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V.

† Lucii Marinei Siculi de reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. XXI.

she might also in dying worship. Her body was buried within a vast tomb of white and limpid alabaster, in the monastery of St. Benedict, of Padoleron on the Po, a house ten miles from Mantua, which had been founded by her grandfather, Tedaldo, and enriched by her own donations, where was found this history metricaly composed.

To the eternal sigh of women the Church has been deeply indebted in all ages: and every where we find monuments of their pious liberality, of which the most illustrious example is doubtless that of this great countess Mathilda, who made the Church of God her heir, offering on the altar of St. Peter, her whole patrimony, extending from Radicofani to Cesena, which from that time has been ever called the patrimony of St. Peter. Celebrated was the munificence of the Countess of Eu, sister of Udalric, Archbishop of Rheims, and of Alberon, Bishop of Metz, who, in the year 959, founded and endowed many monasteries, and restored others that had been ruined by the Normans.* Guilla, mother of the marquis Hugo, in the eleventh century, passing by Arretium, and happening to hear that the church there was commonly entitled St. Mary the poor, exclaimed, in great indignation, "Forbid it, heaven, that we should ever style her poor who produced the Dispenser of celestial riches! Have I," she then asked, "any possessions in this neighbourhood?" and being told that there was a villa near belonging to her, "Let it, then, be given immediately to this church," she replied, "that in future no one may even presume to call it poor."† We find traces of the same devotedness of women to the Church in the most obscure annals. Thus about the year 700 we read of the noble lady, Hermentrude, leaving by will to the church of Bondies, in the diocese of Paris, her oxen, ploughs, and carts, and other implements of labour, and also a quantity of land, as well as certain vestments, to the church of St. Denis, and others to the brethren of Bondies.‡ That great woman, Adelle, wife of Stephen, Count of Blois, who governed his territories after his death in Palestine, and with whom Ives de Chartres used to correspond, besides her liberality to many churches and convents, conferred such benefits upon Mar-

moutiers, as to be styled in its title deeds, "*majoris monasterii amatrix ferventissima.*" A German traveller describes a charming scene in illustration of the affection of women for the ecclesiastical offices, when relating the return of a young Spaniard, Antonio, to his father's house, near Cordova, after an absence of ten years, where no one recognised him but his sister, the most beautiful maiden of Andalusia, and of the world, as her brother Esteban says, and an angel besides. After the most affectionate embraces, and the tenderest entreaties, while a thousand questions were about to be asked respecting kindred and friends, Dolores, for such was the maiden's name, having prepared refreshment to set before her brother, suddenly asks his permission to leave the house. "What, dear little sister, already?" asks Antonio, "before I have spoken ten words will you go forth?" Yes, for it was the moment to repair to the cathedral for mass, and the angelic daughter of Spain, the mild and gracious being, at the same time mystical and gay, will not suffer even a brother's love, and the joy of receiving him after so long an absence to interfere with the duties which she owes to heaven. The long-lost brother accompanies her. They pass through the Moorish arch of the cathedral tower into the court of oranges; one of those spots the memory of which ever remains with the wanderer, to shed a glowing and delicious light of phantasy over the darkest ways of life; the whole air of the place is embalmed with fragrance, and in the centre is a clear fountain; some cypress trees, and two lofty palms are growing near it. Three sides of the court are composed of walks, adorned with Moorish arches, and a tower; the fourth is formed by that wood of a thousand pillars, each of a different marble, adorned with a wondrous workmanship, constituting the cathedral, the nave and choir of which is in the Gothic style, being surrounded with a multitude of chapels, enriched with ancient arabesque mosaics, and the choicest paintings of a Cespedes, a Cano, a Murillo, and other masters. Here knelt down Dolores before the altar, and it was not until her brother had waited long in the court conversing with other young men who met there, that she was prepared to rise and follow him.*

"In Portugal, in the upper ranks of life, female piety and practical religion,

* Desguerrois, Hist. du diocèse de Troyes, 185.

† Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XVIII.

‡ Lebent, Hist. du diocèse de Paris, VI. 61.

* Huber Skizzen aus Spanien.

are singularly conspicuous." It is an English traveller who makes this remark. "Among ladies of rank," he continues, "the characters of Martha and Mary are beautifully blended; for even during the intervals of conversation, whilst their hands are busily employed in knitting and sewing for the poor, their minds and hearts are evidently engaged in meditation and prayer. In this there is no appearance of affectation, nothing obtrusive, or otherwise unpleasant to those who are less piously inclined. They assist at mass every morning, communicate twice a week; they are religious without bigotry, pious without ostentation. A Portuguese family realizes all my ideas, and embodies all my notions of domestic happiness. It is the music of the spheres; it is the harmony and loveliness of nature.*

It was a question with philosophers during the scholastic ages, on which side, betwixt the two of human kind, lay the greatest sin, in the event which first brought guilt into the world. Peter Lombard, the master of the sentences, says, "that the woman sinned against herself, and her neighbour, and God; but that the man sinned only against himself and God; for he seems to have complied, wishing rather to risk all, than leave his companion to perish alone. The woman, therefore," he says, "sinned most, and consequently her punishment was the greater. In dolore paries filios."† On the other hand, Isidore and Hugo of St. Victor conclude, that Adam sinned more than Eve, because he sinned after more deliberation, and having had more entrusted to him.‡ Though St. Augustin says, that Adam's judgment was not deceived in following Eve's advice, but that he obeyed a social necessity.§ After all, St. John of the cross comes to the conclusion that the woman sinned in some respect through ignorance, because she was seduced and deceived, while Adam's fall was worse, "for Adam was not seduced," says the apostle;|| "Adam knew and willed his misfortunes."¶

But whatever difference of opinion may have existed upon this point, and whatever be the cause of the phenomena, whether natural, arising from the fact noticed by

Medea, that "a woman is born to tears,"* or whether it proceed from a more especial grace, in recompense of their early affection for Jesus Christ, all men seem to have been equally convinced of the supereminent piety, and singular religious merit of the female sex, under the influence of faith in the mystery which redeemed the world, and in submissive obedience to the Catholic Church, the mother and mistress of the meek, and the fountain of justice to the human race.

The assiduity of women, in repairing to the Churches, is not a phenomenon which dates from the period of the decline of faith, as some modern travellers through France are inclined to suppose. In the Acts of the Apostles, where there is mention of the oratory on the banks of the river near Philippi, we read; "Et sedentes loquebamur mulieribus, quæ conveniant."†

In primitive times, so many women and slaves embraced Christianity, that it was made an occasion to revile the Christian religion, as if such men alone had courage to preach their doctrine, and as if women alone would listen to it. Thus we see on an ancient gem, an ass clothed in a toga, preaching before two women, who seem to listen attentively; and this is supposed to be a satire on those slaves who endeavoured to convert the women of their master's family. St. Jerome, writing to Vigilantius, and mentioning the profound awe and scrupulous reverence with which he always entered the Churches, adds, "You may, perhaps, laugh to ridicule the weakness of women. I do not blush to possess the faith of those who first beheld our Lord after his resurrection, who were sent to the apostles, and who are commended to the holy apostles, in the mother of our Lord and Saviour. You feast with the men of this world; I will fast with women."‡

The inscription near the shrine of St. Charles of Borromeo, in the cathedral of Milan, particularly states, that the holy archbishop had, in an especial manner, commended himself to the prayers of the devout female sex; which is the epithet that the church always applies to these,—the tenderest, and often most heroic of her children. The virtues that characterized women peculiarly during the middle ages, would be an inexhaustible theme for the

* Letters to Orosius on Portugal.

† Lib. II. distinct. 22.

‡ Hugo de St. Victor, Tract III. c. 6.

§ De Civ. Dei, XIV. 11.

|| Tim. II. 14.

¶ The obscure night of the soul, XXII.

* Eurip. Med. 926.

+ Cap. XVI.

† S. Hieronym. Epist. XXXVII.

historian, or the poet. I can only pass hastily before them, keeping in view their relation to the interior life of families, as constituting part of that justice, for which the human race thirsted, which was given to be the consolation of its pilgrimage, and the recompense of its faith.

Nevertheless, there was an institution existing without this sphere, which though external, produced too great an influence upon the domestic manners of our ancestors, not to be considered as a subject for our present investigation. I allude to the conventual life of nuns, whose example and instructions, both from their having presided over the early education of daughters, and from the necessary connexion which bound so many to the brethren, and other relatives, who continued in the world, must have at all times, exercised no inconsiderable influence upon the character of society in general. Originally, indeed, this influence came from within. Abeillard, in two letters to Heloisa, respecting the duties of her monastic state, shows, that nuns are only descendants of the holy women in the primitive church who accompanied our Lord and his Apostles; and that the monastic institute is only a mode of perpetuating those congregations of virgins and widows who then held so distinguished a rank. Thus, St. Julia, in the third century, is named in the old history, *Sanctimonialis*, and described as leading a holy, religious life at Troyes, in the house of her father, where she remained secluded.*

The deaconesses, for whose ordination there was an express office, were perpetuated in the church until the ninth century, if not even to later times.† Their origin, as that of the recluses, may be easily traced to those pious women among the Jews, amongst whom was Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser, who for many years departed not from the temple, serving God day and night, in fasting and prayer, and who deserved to behold the infant Messiah.‡ The influence of the religious communities of women upon the manners and general tone of society, was communicated through many channels, of which the education of daughters was, no doubt, one of the most efficacious. Dante beholds Constance in Paradise, who had been taken from

to become the wife of the Emperor Henry the Sixth.

"From whom with violence were torn
The saintly folds that shaded her fair brows.
E'en when she to the world again was brought,
In spite of her own will and better wont,
Yet not for that the bosom's inward veil
Did she renounce."*

To an early acquaintance with the convent, much, indeed, that distinguished the character of women in the middle ages must be ascribed, for even when education had not been received there, occasional visits had been made to the devout sisters. The maiden of the castle knew what was the sanctity and peace of the secluded cloistral life, and hence that ideal form of virtue was embalmed in her imagination, and impressed upon her heart with an eternal memory.

St. Odilo, the fifth abbot of Cluni, says, that it would require the pen of a St. Jerome to describe the empress Adelaida, who deserved the same praise as is bestowed on Paula and Marcella, Fabiola, Læta, and Demetriades.† In fact, many illustrious queens lived a cloistral life upon the throne. Such were the wife of Charlemagne; Cunegonde, wife of Henry the First, king of England; Agnes, wife of the Emperor Henry the Third, whose mother was living in the convent of Fructuara; Elizabeth, wife of the Emperor Albert, first archduke of Austria; Rade-gonde, wife of Clotaire; Adoëre, wife of Chilperic; Batilde, wife of Clovis; and Agnes of Bohemia, wife of Frederic the Second. There was, moreover, an incidental mode of influence which nuns who inhabited cloisters exercised upon the life of families, of which an example may be witnessed in the beautiful incident related in the life of Du Guesclin, who, when a boy, owed his first encouragement, and perhaps the seeds of his future greatness, to the charitable and benignant remonstrance in his behalf, which his aunt, who was a nun in a neighbouring cloister, made with his parents, who were in the habits of despising and ill-treating him; for so moved was his young heart by the look and mildness of the nun, that, it is said, from the same hour his whole character seemed changed, and he became an object of as much satisfaction in his father's house, as he had before been of disgust

"The pleasant cloister's pale,"

* Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 40.

† Chardon Hist. de Sacramens, tom. V.

‡ Luc. II. 36.

* Parad. III.

† Bibliothec. Cluniacens.

and aversion.* In the Lord of the Isles there is a parallel instance.

"With sudden impulse forward sprung
The page, and on her neck he hung;
Then recollected instantly,
His head he stoop'd and bent his knee,
Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel.†

St. Lucia, in the convent of St. Christina of the Seven Fountains at Bologna, had been frequently seen by a certain noble youth, as she knelt at the grated window of her chamber, which looked into the church. Perceiving the impression which had been made on this stranger, who appeared to come often to the convent for the purpose of beholding her, she forsook the window, and contented herself with hearing mass from the farthest extremity of her cell, desiring to please Him alone who seeth in secret. The youth in despair departed to a remote and barbarous land, in company with the two thousand Bolognese, who, in the year 1190, went against the Saracens; and, in the meantime, Lucia slept in Christ. The Christians being defeated, and the youth taken prisoner, he was required either to deny his faith, or to suffer death. In his dungeon, the memory of her whom he had so often seen at the grate of the church in happy days came afresh to his mind, and he cried, "O Lucia, virgin of Christ, if thou canst prevail with our Lord, help me with thy prayers, and deliver me now in this distress." Ambrosius of Camaldoli relates that the same night the youth found himself at liberty, that he returned to Bologna, carrying his chains with pious gratitude, and that he placed them devoutly upon her tomb.‡

So interwoven was the ideal of religious cloistered women with every kind of spiritual assistance, that there were families, if you will hear domestic annals, which believed that three nuns always appeared in some part of the house before the death of any of their members, to give them salutary warning. This has been long affirmed of one ancient family in the north of England; and Cardan relates a tradition somewhat similar, respecting a noble house of Parma.§

The travels of the nuns were another mode of communicating the saintly influence of the cloister to the manners of

society. When St. Theresa travelled with some of her nuns, she used to carry a little bell with her, to sound at the usual hours for prayer and silence, as if still in the monastery, and, during these intervals, the mule drivers and conductors of the waggons would never address them. On one occasion, as she travelled with three or four nuns, after leaving Toledo, the crowds that followed her made it necessary sometimes to have guards at the door of the poor people's houses when she stopped for refreshment. The news of her journey spread before her, and every one was ambitious of the honour of receiving her, under his roof. A rich labourer, hearing that she was to pass through his village, ornamented his house, prepared a good dinner, and assembled all his family; he even collected all his flocks, that Theresa might bless them. As she could not remain in that village, the good labourer came out of his house with all his train, to receive her blessing in the street. Nor was this influence confined to those who beheld the cloistered sisters on their journeys, or who received them as guests into their houses as they passed. While remaining within their enclosures, the example and the memory of their sanctity produced no less effect upon the minds of the people, than did their holy prayers and faith in the mind of God, inducing him to show mercy upon those who were united with them in the mystic bond of the communion of saints. There are few volumes of epistolary correspondence belonging to the middle ages, which do not contain proof of the efficacy of this channel for communicating the influence of the cloister to persons who were in the world.

We read that no one ever approached St. Catherine of Sienna, without departing a better person. Who has not heard of the meek Hildegard, who drew the court of kings to the peaceful shores of Bingen's pool, and who was to so many wanderers on the way an odour of life and salvation? No one need be told of the influence which is exercised in our age, by any individual eminently distinguished in a political or literary capacity. We find that he is consulted by persons from all countries of Europe: he commissions congenial minds to develope or revolutionize, according to the passions which move him at the time, the institutions which have existed in distant nations from the most remote antiquity. Well, during the middle ages, there were also individuals who exercised this extra-

* Vie de Du Guesclin, les Vies des grand Capitains Français. † IV.

‡ Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XXX.

§ De varietate rerum.

ordinary privilege; but what seems marvellous and incredible, though most true, these persons were saints; not merely learned monks, acting as philosophers in the schools of their cloister, or as statesmen, as the ministers of kings; not merely doctors and pontiffs, on their chairs of ecclesiastical erudition, but simple maidens, daughters of the people, shepherdesses, and nuns. What dignity of rank, what eminence of genius, what pride of learning, did not yield lowly and devout homage to the meek Hildegard? Pope Anastasius writes to her, his beloved daughter in Christ, to beseech her prayers and those of her sisters on the mountain of St. Robert, near Bingin. Pope Adrian writes to her to confirm her in her good resolutions unto the end. Popes Eugene and Alexander the Third also write to her. Arnold, archbishop of Mayence, writes to her, the devout virgin and abbess, not doubting of the gifts of God, and asking her prayers, that, by their assistance, his days may pass in the fear and love of his Creator. A multitude of bishops from all countries, even from Jerusalem, as also innumerable monks, philosophers, and learned masters from Italy and France, write to her in terms of humility, begging her prayers, and desiring to have the consolation of her mystic and angelic salutations, to whom her answers breathe a solemn strain of prophetic counsel, which announce, in no disguised language, the need of amendment in which some then stood. Thus, to Arnold, archbishop of Mayence, she says "Wherefore do you hide your face from God, as if in perturbation of your angry mind? For I do not offer mystical words from myself, but according to what I behold in that living light; so that often what my mind does not desire, and what my will does not seek, is shown to me in a manner which constrains me to see it." Her answers are always received in a spirit of humility and penitence. Rudolph, the bishop of Liege, writes to her as follows: "In great distress of mind and body, I have desired to write to you, because I greatly need the clemency of God, whom I acknowledge I have offended and irritated by innumerable evils. Therefore, beloved sister, since I know that God is truly with you, I beseech your sanctity by his mercy, to stretch out a hand to me in this distress. Be it your care, by devout prayers, to withdraw me from negligence; and, in answer to me, write whatever has been shown to you

from that unfailing and living light to awaken my sleep. May the most merciful God grant that I may receive consolation from your writings, and that by the help of your intercession, I may attain to the last mansion of eternal quiet." The reply of Hildegard was in these terms: "The Living Light, saith the ways of the Scripture, are straight to the lofty mountains, where flowers exhale their precious fragrance, and where the sweetest wind breathes, bearing delicious odour, and where roses and lilies display their beauteous faces. For a time, the mount had not appeared on account of the darkness of the blind, living air, and because the Son of the Most High had not as yet enlightened the world. Then came the sun from the east enlightening the world, and all the people beheld its splendour. And the day was very bright, and a sweet sound arose. O shepherds, mourn and weep, for that mount is obscured with black clouds. But be thou a good shepherd, and noble in manners, and as the eagle gazes at the sun, so do you, and bring back wanderers to their country; and bear a light to this world, that your soul may live, and that you may hear that sweetest voice from the supreme Judge. *Euge serve bone et fidelis.* Therefore, O thou leader of the people, win a good victory, correct the erring, and cleanse the beautiful pearls from filth, that they may be fit for the highest King. May God protect thee, and deliver thy soul from eternal pain." The Emperor Conrad writes to Hildegard, and says, "Being prevented by the regal state, and harassed with divers troubles and storms, we cannot see you as we desire, yet we will not omit letters, which may pass to you. For, as we hear, there truly abounds in you, the confession of the highest praise, by the sanctity of an innocent life, and by the grandeur of the Spirit wondrously coming upon you. Therefore, though we lead a secular life, we hasten to you, we fly to you, and humbly beg the suffrage of your prayers and exhortations, since we live far otherwise than as we ought; but know for certain, that in all your necessity, to the utmost of our power, we will endeavour to serve you and your sisters; therefore, I commend to your prayers, my son also, as well as myself, who I hope will survive me." In reply, she says, "O king, remain in God, and cast off the deformity of your mind, since God preserves all who seek him purely and devoutly. So hold your kingdom, and administer justice, that you may

not become an alien from the supernal kingdom. To you, therefore, saith God, Be corrected, that you may come purified to those times in which you will no longer blush at your own actions." Philip, count of Flanders, writes to her in the same humble strain, but we have already seen his letter in a former book.*

Of the holy recluses I made mention elsewhere, when examining the ancient churches in which their cells are found, the influence of whose sanctity must not be overlooked here. The pontificate of Hugo, archbishop of Palermo, in the year 1170, was rendered celebrated by that holy anchoress, the delight and safety of Palermo. The virgin Rosaly, the darling of each heart, who from all the youth of Sicily, retired to serve God in the solitude of mountain grottoes, echoing to the billow's sound. Sprung from Charlemagne by the kings of Italy, daughter of Sinnibald, bred in the court of Margaret, wife of King William, she forsook the honours and pleasures of the world, and retired to a cave in the mountains, first of Quisquinæ, and then to Ercta, commonly called Peregrini, near Palermo. In the caverns of Quisquinæ she made, as it were, profession of the anachoretic life, carving on their rocky side, with her own hand, these lines: "Ego Rosalia Sinnibaldi Quisquinæ et Rosarum domini filia, amore Domini mei Jesu Christi in hoc antro habitare decrevi." What liquid delights she drew here from God, what converse she had with celestial messengers, can be conjectured by those who know the rich liberality of Jesus, according to the promise of an hundred fold in the Gospel, and who have heard a maiden's sigh for solitude and heaven. The year of her death is uncertain, but her remains were discovered in the year 1624, during the plague, in a cave on Mount Ercta, under a huge stone, which had often baffled the exertions of the curious. On this occasion, however, having greater perseverance, they succeeded, with repeated strokes of iron bars, in breaking through it, when they found the bones of the virgin Rosalia; falling on their knees, they kissed the sacred reliques. Upon applying, however, to Jannettino Doria, the holy archbishop, he refused to have them exposed to public veneration, until the archives of Palermo, the constant tradition, and the consent of the citizens were found to agree in testimony. It was in

the month of January that these bones, as gems of paradise, were borne on the shoulders of the first nobility through the streets of the capital and placed in the cathedral, where a marble inscription recorded that she had been the means, under divine Providence, of preserving the faithful people, as a multitude of miracles attested. Her festivals were afterwards celebrated on the 15th of July and on the 2nd of September. She is represented in many ancient paintings, in different churches of Sicily, in the habit of an anchoress, having a cross and a book in her hand.*

At Lyons, from the time of St. Eucherius, there had always been devout women, who, under the name of recluses of St. Mary Magdalen, of St. Marguerite, and of St. Helena, shut themselves up in different parts of the city, spending their days in perpetual prayer, and receiving their food only through a window. A certain quantity of corn had been always set apart from the archiepiscopal granaries for their support. "When Raymond the archbishop," as the ancient document says, "being ill informed, and at the suggestion of some who had not God before their eyes, ordained that this allowance should be withheld in future, the recluses remonstrated, and his successor, Guillaume de Thureio, in the year 1359, restored that ancient custom, observing, in his reply, that they were public benefactors, in praying always for the archbishops, for the holy church, for the city, and for all the people." Harald de Lanieux, seigneur of Iseroia, in 1374, left a certain sum in his testament to each of these pious women of the city and suburbs of Lyons. Of the eleven ancient recluseries, the ruins of three, one near the walls, another in the vineyard of St. Martin, and another, called of St. Clair, near the Rhone, were to be seen when Paradin wrote his history.† Frequently the recluses of the middle age were widows. Thus in the Nibelungen poem, Kriemhild, after the death of Sifrids, takes up her residence near the cathedral of Worms. Before the beginning of the war against the Huns, the mighty count Ulrich lived at Buckhorn, on the lake of Constance, with his wife, Wendelgard, niece of the emperor, Otho I., in a happy and blessed union. Dreadful was the shock of this noble lady when intelligence arrived of her husband having fallen in battle

* Chronic. Hirsangensis, I.

* Sicilia Sacra, I. p. 101.

† Paradin Hist. de Lyon, Lib. II. c. 80.

against the Huns. To console herself in this calamity, she went to St. Gall, and fixed her habitation near St. Mangel's church, received consecration from the bishop, and under the guidance of the blessed Wiborad, devoted herself wholly to works of virtue, with the intention of becoming a recluse. Every year she went from St. Gall to Buchhorn, to honour the memory of her noble lord with a festal anniversary. Once, as she was thus with her own hands distributing alms, a poor man demanded eagerly a garment, and seizing that which she offered, pulled her towards himself with it, and kissed her. Wendelgard, astonished and afflicted, directed her servants to punish this audacious beggar, when lo! shewing a certain scar, he enabled her to discover in him her count Ulrich, whom she had thought dead. The history relates that Wendelgard was immediately restored to him, after the monks had declared her consecration null.* The fate of Wiborad, her holy instructress, was singular and full of pity. She alone fell a victim, when in the year 925, the Huns first came to St. Gall. Every one else had fled. The pagans supposed that there was a treasure concealed in her cell, and as they could find no door, they entered it through the roof, and finding only the poor recluse at her prayers, they struck her head with a halbert, inflicting a wound by which she bled to death. "Wiborad paganis occisa," says the catalogue of the monks of St. Gall. "Wiborad martyrizata est," say the *Annales Hepidanni*. She was born in Kringnon in Argovia; she had learned from her brother, Hatto, to repeat the Psalms in Latin, had made a pilgrimage to Rome, and on her return had led a cloisteral life with two maidens, in a house near the cathedral of Constance, under the instruction of the recluse Zilia. After four years, she removed to St. Mangel's church, at St. Gall, where, in 915, she caused herself to be enclosed by bishop Salomon. She passed her time in prayer, weaving cloth, and giving instructions to persons of all classes, who regarded her with veneration, to whom she used to speak through her little window, exhorting them to love virtue, and avoid sin. Especially she employed herself in guiding the pious women, who came there for the purpose of becoming either recluses, as the

noble virgin Raschild, or nuns, as her two maids, Bertrada and Gebena, or consecrated widows, as the countess Wendelgard. After eight days the body of the blessed woman was committed to the earth, the whole community of the cloister assisting. She was regarded immediately as a martyr, and Abbot Engelbert prescribed that her anniversary should be celebrated at St. Mary's church, which order was confirmed by Pope Clement II., who canonized her. In later times a chapel was erected under her invocation near that church, and a chaplain appointed to serve it.*

The names of many recluses occur in the chronicles of the tenth century. Kerhild, the aunt of St. Notker, Bertrad, the young widow, Gisela, Diemut, Udalgard, Ina, Gotelinda, and others, many of whom attained to a great age, followed this mode of life. Kerhild continued in her cell fifty-six years, Bertrad twenty-two years, and Gotelinda is described as being a very aged penitent.† With what affection the Germans still cling to the memory of the recluses, may be witnessed in Tiek's affecting tragedy, entitled the life and death of the holy Genoveva, who had been wife to count Siegfried, a warrior under Charles Martel; the cave which this saint inhabited in the forest near Andernach, may still be seen. Certainly the cavern of St. Rosalie, on the Sicilian shore, and the mountain where Geneviève tended her flock, are, in the ideas of every Catholic poet embalmed with the fragrant of heaven. The life of the holy Dorothea is recorded in detail by the historian of Prussia, as forming one of the most interesting episodes in the annals of that nation.‡ At her earnest entreaty, and by consent of the bishop, in the church of St. John at Marienwerder, a cell was built, into which, on the second of May, in the year 1393, St. Dorothea was admitted as a recluse, where she was enclosed by her confessor, John of Marienwerder, and there she spent the rest of her life in constant prayer and meditation, every day receiving our Lord in communion, and speaking to no one without permission, till the night of the twenty-sixth of June, in the year 1394, when she departed in great peace, and sweetness to the embraces of her heavenly spouse. Then after three days, the cell was opened, and her body transported with great solemnity, by order

* Ildefons von Arx Geschichte des St. Gallen, I. 225.

* Ildefons von Arx Geschichte des St. Gallen, I. 216. + Eckehard in Lib. Bened. 154.

† Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V. 617.

of the bishop, John of Pomerania, to the cathedral of Marienwerder, where it was buried under a pompous tomb, at which innumerable miracles were immediately wrought, as a crowd of contemporary authors attest ; so that multitudes of sick were carried thither from distant lands to be healed, and whither an innumerable host of devout pilgrims always streamed on her anniversary, to offer up their prayers, and to revere her relics.*

The historian of the Teutonic order, concludes his fifth book with this account of St. Dorothea, and these are his last words, "In the evening of this century which had so often beheld the soil of Prussia and Lithuania dyed with blood, devastated by wild war, laid waste by flames, by plunderers and slayers, and filled with lamentation and woe, over this wild and fearful scene stands the form of the holy penitent, as a consoling and lofty vision of charity and peace." "She lived in the memories of men," to use the words of the grand master, Konrad von Jungingen, "as a patron against calumny, a nurse of piety against sorrow, a light of the holy church, an oil of mercy ; to the frigid a fire of charity, and to the dead in corporal and spiritual miseries, a refreshing and reviving joy." The solemnity of an ecclesiastical origin was not essential to this mode of life, which was found to yield such enjoyments. Margaret Ruttegerin lived as a recluse in her own house and garden at St. Gall, and obtained from abbot Henry IV., an order that on her death the church should take care of this house until some other woman should announce an intention of becoming a recluse, to whom it was to be conceded. In the eleventh century these recluses began to live no longer in solitude, but three, six, or eight together, in enclosures styled closes, near monasteries or churches. In the twelfth century, the daughters of peasants, who had not as much facility for being received into regular cloisters, began to adopt in great numbers this manner of life, and to inhabit huts in woods, or on the points of rocks, or in deep valleys, and funds were left by devout persons for supporting them.† Thus at St. Gall there were the close of St. Mangen, the close of St. John, the close of St. Toergen, the close at St. Leonard's church, and the wood cell of Hundtobel, inhabited by wood

sisters : at Pfteffers there were similar closes and cells as at most other places.

It is time now to inquire what was the original source and principle the channels and operations of which we have witnessed? What was the philosophical idea that presided over the institution of the cloisteral life? St. Chrysostom will tell you that "it was simply an observation of the greater freedom furnished by that state which cut off by the root all human disturbances, and enabled the soul to apply all its faculties to the things of God."* Hence in the acts of the Benedictines, in the ninth century, we read of hospices being erected for unmarried men as well as for widows. Writers of a certain class, in modern times, are very indignant that the church should sanction an institution which admits of their being maidens, who by their own choice are

"For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd
Chaunting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless
moon."

But impartial historians are obliged to pay a tribute of admiration to that order by means of which such a multitude of noble intelligences were able to consecrate themselves in so many various ways, to every service that can exalt and console the human race ; some in solitude and seclusion taking refuge in the immensity of God, others making vows to assist the poor, to tend the sick, to educate orphans : nor have there been wanting to our times philosophers who could defend with eloquent pens from the brutal scoffs of the self-styled rational school, those holy communities, where the daughters of the poor, along with the Montmorencis, the Bourbons, and the Condés, may follow the example of those illustrious Roman ladies, celebrated by St. Jerome, who were descended from the Scipios and the Emilian blood, and devote themselves in peace to the object of their immense desire. The nun of the middle ages was not a victim, as modern writers would lead men to suppose. Eleanor, daughter of the Earl of Richmond, and sister of Arthur of Brittany, on being commanded by her father to remove from the convent of Ambresbury to Fontevrault, had no other fear but that of being obliged to return to the world ; to obviate which danger, she took the solemn vows before leaving England.†

* Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V. 676.

† Chronic. Bertholdi Constant. ad an. 1091.

* Tractat. de Virginitate.

† Lobineau Hist. de Bret. Liv. V.

Neither was such the opinion of persons who remained in society. Observe the style in which Francis Picus of Mirandula writes to his sister, who was a nun: "We rejoice in the Lord, dearest sister, and we contemplate with amazement what good things God hath done for your soul, who not only hath shown to you the way of perfection, but hath led you, as it were, by the hand, and introduced you within the narrow door. You have left brothers, parents, the world and all its blandishments, and fled naked to the standard of the cross. O happy souls, to whom God hath given the will of choosing poverty, that they may receive an hundred fold in this life, sisters, and mothers, and consolations ineffable, and in the future world an eternal crown of glory."*

And now methinks it will cast great light upon history to visit one of these convents of the middle age,

"Where peaceful rule, and duty free,
Walks hand in hand with charity;
Where oft devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision and deep mystery;"

a privilege not confined to the sisters of St. Hilda, if you will only credit the historians of Prussia, who attest that St. Dorothea predicted the death of the grand master of the Teutonic Order, Konrad Von Wallenrod, and the choice and fate of his successor,† or the ancient tradition which relates that St. Bridget warned pope St. Urban V. not to proceed with his intended voyage for the sake of making peace between France and England, and that the event of his death immediately on his arriving at Avignon, proved the more than human foresight which had dictated her counsel. A few detached histories will show what was in general the object of these foundations, and the character of those who accomplished it. Queen Blanche, in her charter of foundation to the abbey of Maubuisson, says that she has designed that house for nuns of the Cistercian order, who may pray God for the souls of Alphonso, King of Castille, her father, and of Eleanor, her mother. After the first abbess, who was but a simple nun that had been removed from the abbey of St. Anthony, at Paris, almost all the abbesses were women of high and royal blood, Montmorencis, De

Moncys, D'Ivry, D'Etoutevilles, De Dindevilles, D'Annebaults, and D'Estrées. Louisa-Mary, Palatine of Bavaria, daughter of Frederic IV. King of Bohemia, having abjured heresy in 1658, took the veil here, and became abbess. She was an admirable artist, and used to present her holy paintings to the house, and to the parish churches of the neighbourhood. Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the Gothic church of this royal abbey of Maubuisson. Queen Blanche was buried in the middle of the choir, under a tomb of brass, representing her figure, and containing eight Latin lines, the last of which records that she died a nun—

"Tanta prius, talis jacet hic pauper monialis."

Mathew Paris mentions that she took the veil before her death, that her crown was placed over it, and that she was thus buried.* So early as the year 670, we find a rich lady named Chrotilda building a convent for nuns at Bruyeres, in the diocese of Paris, and her niece becoming the first abbess.† Magdalen Tasse, sister of St. Francis Xavier, after being in her youth lady of honour to queen Isabella, abandoned the court of Arragon for solitude and the cross. She became abbess of the convent of St. Clare, at Gandia, where she practised an act of heroic charity in her last moments, imploring an easy death for a sister, and the sufferings to which she knew by revelation that sister had been destined for herself. Louise-Marie de France, daughter of Louis XV., who took the veil in the convent of the Carmelites, at St. Denis, used often to speak of the happiness of her condition in comparison with her former state. "As we have customs," she used to say, "so had the court, but the latter were far more severe than the former. In the evening at five I am now summoned to prayer; formerly I had to assist at play. At nine the bell calls me to matins; at Versailles, at that hour, I used to be called to the theatre." It was a frequent custom for ladies to make retreats in convents, where some even remained during their lives. Henrietta Maria of France, Queen of England, founded a convent of the visitation at Chaillot, in which she spent the year 1658. Louisa, Palatine of Bavaria, her niece, came to her there, and remained a year edifying all the

* Joan. Francis Picus Mirand. Epist. Lib. IV.
† Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V.

* Lebeuf. Hist. du diocèse de Paris, tom. IV. 188.
† Id. IX. 236.

community, leading the life of a nun without having taken the habit. The blessed Isabella, sister of St. Louis, lived in a separate apartment in the abbey of Longchamps, without being a professed nun. Two princesses of the blood, Blanche of France, fourth daughter of Philippe le Long and Jane of Navarre, died in that house, having taken the veil. King Philip used frequently to visit this convent, and lodge there, in which also he died, after his daughter had taken the veil. When Conan-le-gros, Prince of Brittany, visited Fontevrault with his mother, he saw there Matilda of Anjou, his cousin, already a widow before the age of twenty, who had resolved thenceforth to have no other spouse but the Son of God.* Details of this kind show how the two lives were intermixed, and what an action must have been exercised upon society by the religious communities of women. The portrait of the noble Abbess of St. Hilda, though by a modern poet who too often suffers the prejudices of a sect to disfigure his historical pictures, has so much resemblance to the real character that it cannot be viewed without pleasure :

"The Abbess was of noble blood
But early took the veil and hood,
Ere upon life she cast a look,
Or knew the world that she forsook.
Love, to her ear, was but a name
Combined with vanity and shame;
Her hopes, her fears, her joys were all
Bounded within the cloister wall:
And her ambition's highest aim
To emulate Saint Hilda's fame:
For this she gave her ample dower
To raise the convent's eastern tower;
For this, with carving rare and quaint,
She decked the chapel of the saint,
And gave the relique-shrine of cost
With ivory and gems embost;
The poor her convent's bounty blest,
The pilgrim in its halls found rest."

We have, however, a portrait of St. Hilda, from the hand of the venerable Bede. He says, that "while abbess of the monastery of Tadcaster, bishop Aidan and all the religious men that were acquainted with her, were so taken with her wisdom, and her affection to the service of God, that they visited her often, had a great respect for her, and diligently instructed her in all good. Her wisdom and prudence were so great that not only persons of an inferior rank resorted to her for counsel in their necessities, but even kings and princes sometimes sought and followed her advice. Nor was this servant of Christ, Abbess

Hilda, (who for her extraordinary piety and grace was called mother, by all that knew her) an example of life only in her own monastery; she also afforded occasions of salvation and correction to very many living at a great distance, who had the happiness to hear by fame of her industry and virtue."

Mabillon ascribes to the influence of St. Boniface what he terms "the singular ornament of his order," viz. the learning of the nuns who followed the Benedictine rule. Willibald describes those of Britain as profound in the studies usual to men; and in Germany the same example was followed, so that of Chunihilt and Berathgīt we read, "Valdæ eruditæ in liberali scientia;" and Lieba is described as so devoted to study, that "excepting when at prayer, the divine pages never left her hands." She had been instructed in grammar, and the other liberal arts at an early age, and she became in the end most learned. Nay, the nuns of this age followed the example of the monks in transcribing books, and even in composing others. Those of the monastery of Eikers, in Belgium, became celebrated for their labours in reading and meditating, in writing and in painting. It is recorded of the abbesses Harlind and Renild, that besides works of embroidery and weaving, they had written with their own hands the four Gospels, the whole Psalter, and many other books of the divine Scripture, which they ornamented with liquid gold, gems, and pearls. In an earlier age, it is recorded of Casaria, Abbess of Arles, that "her nuns, having her for mistress, wrote out beautifully several divine books, during the time that was spent between psalmody and fasting, vigils and readings." A theme of general admiration in Germany had been the learning of Gertrude, and Hros-wita the nun of Gandersheim, who had been an admirable poet, and who sung in verse the deeds of the emperor Otho I.* Gervaise remarks, that "the problems of Heloise, or the questions on the sacred Scriptures which she and her nuns used to propose to Abeillard, prove by the choice of difficulties that these sisters exercised an acute sense of discernment." How interesting is the following epistle of Peter the venerable to the Abbess Heloise:—"When I was young, I remember hearing of your renown, not indeed at that time of your religion, but of your honest and

* Lobineau Hist. de Bret. Liv. IV.

* In III. Sæcul. Benedict. § 4.

laudable studies. I used to hear that a woman, although bound in the trammels of the world, applied herself diligently to literary pursuits, and to the study of secular wisdom, so as to surpass not only other women, but almost all men. Soon after, when it pleased the Most High to call you by his grace, you changed the nature of your studies, as a truly philosophic woman; for logic substituting the Gospel, for physics the apostle, for Plato Christ, for the academy the cloister. You have carried off spoils from conquered enemies, and have returned with Egyptian treasures, after passing the desert of this pilgrimage, to erect a precious tabernacle in your heart to God. These things, sister beloved in the Lord, I say to you, not through adulation, but for the sake of exhortation, that you may be rendered more careful to preserve that good, and more ardent to excite the holy sisters who are subject to you; for though a woman, you are one of those animals that Ezekiel the prophet beheld, which ought not only to burn like a coal, but like a lamp to burn and shine. To you indeed remains the palm of humility and of discipline. It is sweet to me to prolong discourse with you, for I am delighted with your celebrated erudition, and still more enchanted with the fame of your sanctity.* Thus was perpetuated in the holy communities of the middle age that phenomenon of learned religious women, which had so much edified the Church in early times, of which we find so many examples in the letters of St. Jerome. He says that Marcella acquired in a few months a knowledge which he had not himself obtained till after the labour of many years. "What virtue did I find in her! what penetration, what purity, what holiness! She became so learned, that after my departure, whenever any difficulty was found in any obscure passage of my book, people used to apply to her, as to a judge; but as she possessed to a sovereign degree that delicate tact which dictates always what is becoming, she used to communicate her ideas, even those that she owed wholly to the penetration of her mind, as having been suggested to her either by me or by some one else, so that while instructing others, she appeared to be a pupil herself; for she remembered the prohibition of the apostle."†

* S. Petri Ven. Abb. Clun. Epist. Lib. IV. 21. Bibliotheca Cluniacensis.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 34. S. Hieronym. Epist. ad Principiam, Virg.

We have seen the influence which the religious communities of women, and the example of holy recluses, must have produced upon the general manners of society during the ages of faith. Let us proceed to speak of the material condition of women in the middle ages, in relation to the social order.

No one need be told of the moral and social state in which Christianity found women when it commenced its visible eternal course. There were, it is true, some Pagan women who had a strong disposition to embrace the Jewish religion, and to worship the true God, whom we find styled in the Latin epitaphs, "religionis, Judaicæ metuentes." Thus we have an inscription to this effect, "Aurelius Soter, et Aurelius Stephanus Soteriæ matri pientissimæ, religioni Judaicæ metuenti." Such women had but a short step to make to become Christians, as in like manner there are multitudes of women born and educated under the modern discipline who entertain a certain fear and instinctive veneration for the Catholic Church, and whose conversion is at all times an easy task to those who medicine the soul. Besides these, moreover, there were, in the worst times, among the Gentiles, some few "in whom," as Cicero says, alluding to Cæcilia, "remained, as if for the sake of example, the vestiges of ancient duty."* Pliny speaks, in remarkable terms, of Fannia, a Roman matron, "Quæ castitas illius!" he exclaims, "quæ sanctitas! quanta gravitas! quanta constantia! non minus amabilis quam veneranda!"† The admirers of the Pythagorean discipline could enumerate seventeen women whom, in different ages, it had formed to illustrious virtue.‡ The old poets, too, commemorated the fleetness in hunting of Atalanta, the natural affection of Anticlea, the marital love of Alcestis, and the generous soul of Machaïria. Celebrated were the philosophic apophthegms of Theana the Pythagorean, whom Didymus affirms to have been the first woman to philosophize and write poems, as also the science of Themisto, the wife of Zoilus; of Lampasene, the wife of Leontius; and of Muia, the daughter of Theanes. All the daughters of Diodorus, Menexene, Argeia, Theagnis, Artemesia, and Pantacleia, were dialecticians. Arete the Cyrenean, in-

* Pro S. Roscio Amer.

† Epist. VII. 19.

‡ Jamblich. de Pythagoric. vita, cap. 36.

structed her son Aristippus, surnamed *τον μητροδιδασκρον*. With Plato philosophized Latheneia the Arcadian, and Axiothea the Phliasian, and with Socrates, Aspasia. St. Clemens of Alexandria says, "it would be long to tell of Corinna and Telesilla, of Sappho, and Eirene the daughter of Cratinus, and of Anaxandra, and of many others."* Nevertheless the opinion of the ancients respecting the rank which ought to be assigned to women, was but little in harmony with these examples. The Athenian in Plato, speaks of it as a principle acknowledged on all hands, that the female sex is worse disposed towards virtue than the male,† which even Æschylus seems ready to admit, for his Minerva delivers the same judgment :

τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αἰνῶ πάντα,
ἀπαντὶ θυμῷ!

Pericles declares that the sum of female virtue consists in being spoken of as little as possible, whether for good or evil;§ and, in fact, we find that St. Jerome has to apologize to the Gentiles for dwelling at length on the praise of women: for he justifies himself by observing, that Christ whose religion he preaches to them, did not disdain to have the three Marys for his disciples, and that it was to women he first showed himself after his resurrection.|| The social condition of that sex corresponded with these narrow views. Wherever Christianity found woman, she was without security, and often held under a cruel and sanguinary despotism. It is an historical fact, though it seems hardly credible, that the Pagan Prussians had a custom of killing every female child in each family excepting one; and the bull of Honorius the Third denounces this enormous barbarity, as if invented to oppose the propagation of the human race. Certainly the diabolic tradition of which I shall hereafter speak is here. In the ancient civilization of the Gentiles, the wife in general was a personage so obscure and unimportant, that Medea in the tragedy, is represented as not knowing whether the king Ægeus is married or not.¶ The women amongst the Dorians, indeed were addressed by the title of ladies, *δέσποιναι*, a title uncommon in Greece, expressive of the

estimation in which they were held; but the wives of the Ionians, according to Herodotus, did not even dare to address their husbands by their proper names; yet, as Meda says, women then in marriage had but one hope,

ἡμῖν δ' ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν φυχήν βλέπειν.*

We find the women of the ancient drama continually lamenting the destiny which rules them :

πάντων δ' ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμψυχα, καὶ γνώμην ἔχει,
γυναικες ἐσμέν ἀθλιώτατον φύτον.†

From this reality of degradation and sorrow, all the ideas communicated by the Christian religion, were calculated, indeed, to deliver woman; but it should be remembered, that it was the doctrine of virginity, as a French writer truly observes, which has more than all contributed to their emancipation. Before this doctrine was delivered or confirmed by Christianity, the woman could not treat upon equal terms with the man; but by making the virginal state a new condition, and that independent of all positive institutions, Christianity changed every thing; for, from the first moment that there was a free and voluntary condition of life for women, they had a personal importance; and this doctrine of virginity, which seems fatal to marriage, on the contrary constituted its new force and its grandeur; for, from this moment, it was what it had never been before, a free and reciprocal alliance. The tone and manners of society, indeed, at present, sufficiently prove that the modern philosophic systems, by attaching ridicule to the virginal state, have undermined the edifice which secured the social dignity and security of women.

With respect to the ancients, I know not whether the fact that they had not before them the same examples as have been given to Christian ages, may be admitted as some extenuation; their ideal of woman was certainly wholly different from that which the Catholic religion has created. There were, indeed, examples, the memory of which can never perish, when, as St. Augustin says, one woman had more humanity than a whole nation;‡ but, in general, the angel of mercy, the mild and gracious being, full of pity for

* Stromat. Lib. IV. c. 19.

† De Legibus, Lib. VI.

‡ Eumenid. 737.

§ Thucyd. II. 45.

¶ St. Hieronym. Epist. ad Principiam, Virg.

¶ Eurip. Med. 670.

* 249.

† Id. 233.

‡ De Civitate Dei, Lib. III. 19.

all suffering, and at the same time the maiden who could support any labour for the love of God's church, like Sabine de Steinbach, in the thirteenth century, who worked at the towers of the cathedral of Strasburg, or like the heroic daughters of St. Vincent of Paul, who endured privations and toils that seem incredible, was a character that the heathen society could not have conceived. We must not seek by false praise to exalt the moral worth of the ancients beyond its real value. It is the Catholic religion, or its traditional force, which has provided that asylum for the suffering and discouraged heart. When the gladiators used to ask for life, the Delias, Lesbias, Cynthias, Lydias, all these women of Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, and Horace, would give the signal for death with the same hand that the Muses had so often sung. It is the author of the *Martyrs* who makes this observation.* What a contrast to the ideal of women in ages of faith, when a philosopher like Marsilius Ficinus, could find no stronger reason for recommending marriage to his friend Antonio Pelocta, than that unless he knew what it was to see a wife in sorrow, he would not know how to feel compassion for the calamities of others.† Women of the Catholic type, who could thus soften the hearts of obdurate men, and fill their souls with infinite and truly divine pity, who could suggest to the poets of the twelfth century, who collected and no doubt retouched the *Niebilungen*, that exquisite line, "the virtues of the maiden made other ladies fair;" who could inspire a Gerson and a St. Bonaventura with that thought, that there never was such an antidote to the fascination of sin as the beauteous face of the blessed virgin, which presented, as S. Ambrose and S. Jerome said, the image of her soul,—women, upon whom the ideal of Mary shed so sweet a light of sanctity, and who, in return, could enable men to understand, and in some measure behold, what was the innocence and piety, and grace, of that divine mother,—woman of that heroic devotion which we read of in the acts of holy martyrs, and to which in latter times Pacca bears so noble a testimony, when speaking of the pious French ladies during the last dreadful persecutions of the Church in France,‡—women, like the Andalusian maid, the fairest of the fair and all angelic,

like the Spanish daughter in general, of grace indescribable, answering to the most lovely form of the imagination, appearing at the same time mystical and gay, and yet never wishing to turn aside from the spectacle of misery, when there is a possibility of alleviating it, who will throw down her mandolin, and quit the pageant of the castle hall, to bind up the beggar's wounds, and heap coals of fire on the head of some blaspheming wretch,—these were, in truth, beings of a new creation, the fruits of that faith which could remove mountains, and of that spirit which renews the face of the earth. Admirable, indeed, was this restoration of nature which their virtues attested, for

"Where does the wisdom and the power divine
In a more bright and sweet reflection shine?
Where do we finer strokes and colours see
Of the Creator's real poetry?"

The saints and holy fathers are never weary in expressing their regard and admiration for these devoted daughters of the Church, who may often be represented like St. Elizabeth in the old paintings, adorned with three crowns, to denote that as virgins, wives, and widows, their conversation was always most holy.* Never was it, as S. Bernard says, from any feeling contrary to this intimate affection, that youth was so carefully admonished to retain its modesty. It was not that it should disdain what God hath made, but that it should fly from what man hath added;† that as S. Augustin says, it might not meet with another Eve, nor suffer from that shade of tenderness which is produced by the foliage of the tree which supplied the first clothing to her nakedness.‡ Hear St. Jerome consoling Paula on the death of her daughter, the young widow Blezilla, "Who will give water to my head and a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep, not, as Jeremiah saith, for the wounds of my people, nor as Jesus, for the misery of Jerusalem, but that I may weep for sanctity, mercy, innocence, chastity, that I may weep for all virtues failing in one stroke of death? I confess my affections. This whole book is written with tears. I call to witness Jesus, whom Blezilla now follows; I call to witness the holy angels, whose fellowship she now enjoys, that my sorrow has equalled yours, Paula. Therefore, while a spirit rules

* Lib. III. 53. † Epist. Lib. IV.
‡ *Memorie Storiche*, II. c. 2.

* *Wadding Annal. Minorum*, tom. I. 1235.
† *De ordine vitæ*. ‡ St. August. Epist. ad Læt.

these limbs, while the breath of life is granted to me, I swear that her name shall be ever on my tongue, to her will I dedicate my labours, for her will I spend my strength. There shall be no page that does not sound Blesilla; and to whatever region these memorials of our discourse shall penetrate, there with them shall she be found."*

Amidst the darkest scenes of history, we always meet with testimonies to the angelic graces of the women who stood near. The sons of Roger de Montgomeri, by the daughter of William Talvas, surnamed the Vagabond, were ferocious, greedy, and remorseless oppressors of the poor; but William of Jumièges remarks at the same time, that his daughters, Emma, Matilda, Mabile, and Sibylle, were generous, honourable, and full of affability for the poor, as also for monks and the other servants of God.†

Behold S. Jane. Who is this image of mildness and sanctity, this foundress of the order of the Annunciation at Bourges, and who dies wearing its habit, after a life of great innocence and suffering? She is the daughter of Louis the Eleventh of France.

Guilla had lately become the wife of the Marquis Rainerius, when S. Peter Damian wrote to her as follows: "Daughter, you have passed by marriage into a house sufficiently ample, indeed, but of evil manners; eminent in riches, but confused by a depraved law of living. Endeavour to correct this. Let the confiscations of the poor be abolished; put an end to all unjust customs, and to the oppression of the rustics. Let not the orphan's food taste sweet in your mouth, and remember the fate of the wife of Count Hubert, your own brother, who perished under the ruins of his castle, which fell to the ground the same day that she took away the swine of a widow, and spurned her, when she asked a portion of it, from the gate."‡ After some years, we find a summons sent to this Marquis, to appear within three weeks, in person or by legate, at Rome, before Gregory the Seventh, to show why he should not incur anathema, for slaying his brother with his own hand, and for other deeds against his own soul.§ The letter of the saint shows, however, that much was in the power of the wife, even in cases the most discouraging. So also in the metrical history of the Countess Matilda, by Doniso the Benedictine, we read

* Epist. XXII. ad Paulam.

† Hist. du Normand. Lib. VII. c. 16.

‡ S. Pet. Damiani, Epist. 18. Lib. VII.

§ Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XVIII.

of Ildegard often persuading her husband to follow better things.

"Conjugis Attonis non fiat oblivio nobis
Ildegarda quidem fuit hujus nomen amicæ
Docta, gubernatrix, prudens, proba, consiliatrix
Ad meliora virum suadebat sæpius ipsum,
Cum quo Birsellum monachis fabricavit habendum."*

That nothing was more intolerable than a rich woman, was the conviction of the Roman satirist;† but Catholicism could even associate riches and the splendours of a throne with the graces and mildness of the female heart. In fact, during the ages of faith, the daughters of kings might often have heard addressed to themselves those words of the poet,

"I hold you as a thing ensky'd, and sainted
By your renouncement, an immortal spirit;
And to be talked with in sincerity
As with a saint."

The character of Maude, wife of King Henry the First is thus described,

"Prospera non lætam fecere, nec aspera tristem,
Aspera risus erant, prospera terra erant.
Non decor effecit fragilem, non sceptrum super-
bam;
Sola potens humilis, sola pudica decens."

She used to go every day in the Lent season to Westminster Abbey barefoot. She would wash and kiss the feet of the poor people and give them bountiful alms, for which, being reprehended by a courtier, she gave him a short answer, which is recorded by Robert of Gloucester.

"Madame for Goddes love is this wel i doo
To handle sich unclene lymmes, and to kisse so;
Foule wolde the kyng thynk if that hit he wiste,
And ryght wel abyte hym er he your mouth
kiste.
'Sur, sur,' quod the Quene, 'be stille, why
sayste thou so,
Our Lord hymself ensample gaf so for to do.'"

Pass to what land we will, it is still the same character which we meet everywhere. We behold it in Alice, duchess of Brittany, on whose tomb, in the Abbey of Villeneuve, we read

"Inter opes humilis ita vixit, quod sibi vilis
Mundus erat pridem, licet arderet eidem."

We behold it in Blanche of Navarre,

* Vita comit. Mathild. Lib. I. c. 3. Muratori
Rer. Italic. Scriptor. tom. V.
† Juv. Sat. VI.

who was commemorated on her tomb in the Abbey of Joie, as the mother of the poor, and the living rule of manners. We behold it in the ducal house of Tuscany, of which Donizo the Benedictine describes the illustrious line.

"Uxor Tedaldi fit Gaillis dicta Ducatrix
Hæc placuit parvis pietate, placebat et altis."*

Above all, in the person of the illustrious Mathilda, it appears in its full lustre.

"Prospera non mutant, seu non hanc tristia turbant.

Bajulat hæc parvos, inopes sustentat et altos
O cultrix Christi, quantum studiosa fuisti,
A te non ullus vacuus discessit homulus,
Si Domini certum quisti fore discere servum."

The memory of the Catholic lady must have been still fresh in the minds of his contemporaries, when Spenser gave that picture of the matron in his Fairy Queen.

"Whose only joy was to relieve the needs
Of wretched souls, and help the helpelesse
pore.

All night she spent in bidding of her bedes,
And all the day in doing good and godly deedes."†

With these meek saints we shall hereafter become more acquainted, when we come to visit the institutions of pity in reference to the benediction of the merciful. For the present, in relation to the justice of the middle ages, it will be sufficient of a few to speak. Women being unable, as St. Theresa observes, to preach by words, in consequence of the prohibition of the apostle, endeavoured always to preach by their actions.‡ It was Maria de Vignarod, duchess of Aiguillon, who instituted the house in Rome of the Priests of the Mission: and St. Frances, while her husband lived, wishing to withdraw the Roman matrons from secular pomps and vanity, founded at Rome the house of the Oblats, under the rule of St. Benedict, where, upon becoming a widow, she retired, after begging admission with tears.

The lady of Beaufort Ferrand was said to have embalmed with the odours of her example, the parish of Janvry, and others adjoining, in the diocese of Paris. Ancient books tell of her prodigious alms, her desire to procure instruction for the peasants, her protection of the curates in the exer-

cise of their duty, restraining abuses, her zeal in instructing poor women, and their daughters, in visiting the sick and the dying, in accompanying the blessed sacrament, on foot, to whatever distance it was carried, and in providing ornaments for the Churches. She died in 1650.* Lebeuf relates that at Bretigny the memory of the Lady of Berthevin, who died in 1587, was always in great veneration there, though there was no longer any one of her family in the country. The spot where she had been buried was known by tradition, though it was marked by no monument; and the people generally loved to repeat her name, as that of a holy woman who had made a blessed end.† In like manner, the wife of Bouchard de Montmorency, who died in the fourteenth century, being represented on a tomb in the Church of Housaye, without any name or inscription, was, nevertheless, known by the people to have been named Anne; and so strong was the tradition of her holy life, that when the Abbe Lebeuf wrote his history of the Diocese of Paris, he says they used always to speak of her as the Lady St. Anne.‡

Rohesia, daughter of Aubrey de Vere, chief justice of England, under Henry I., and wife to Geoffrey Mandeville, the first earl of Essex, erected a cross in the high way, on the spot where the town of Royston now stands; a pious work to keep the wayfarer in mind of Christ's passion; whereupon it was called "Crux Rohesie," before there was either church or town; but afterwards, when Eustach de Merch had founded there a little monastery of canons regular in honour of St. Thomas of Canterbury, there were inns built there, so that in process of time, by little and little, it grew to be a town which was called Rohesia's town; or Royston. There is here a curious grotto, into which I have often descended with religious reverence, the walls of which are covered with sacred images, and religious symbols, which were wrought, it is supposed, by the hands of this devout lady, who, as one tradition relates, became a recluse in her latter days. Innumerable are the memorials of female piety, which date from the middle ages. Marguerite, queen of Scotland, daughter of Edward, king of Hungary, who was the son of Edmond Ironside, and brother of Edward, king of England, was distinguished by the sanctity

* Vita Mathild. Lib. I. c. 4. Murat. Ber. Italic. Script. tom. V.

† Book I. 10.

‡ The Road of Perfection, chap. V.

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. IX. 144.

† Id. XI. 292.

‡ Id. tom. XIV. 231.

of her life, as well as by the nobleness of her blood, being sprung from a long line of kings. Among other good deeds, she rebuilt the convent of Iona, which Columban, the servant of God, had constructed in the time of Brude, king of the Picts, but which had fallen to ruin through the tempests of war, and length of years.* The Saxon chronicles are full of allusions to the foundations made by devout women, such as the daughter of Erkenbert, king of Kent, who is styled "holy damsel of an illustrious sire." St. Bathilda, queen of the Franks, whom Corby in Picardy, revered as its foundress, is minutely described by a writer who lived in the same age. "Being of Saxon race," he says, "she was of a gracious and subtle form, and of a beautiful and cheerful countenance. To the king, her husband, she showed herself as an obedient wife; to the princes as a mother; to the priests as a daughter; to young men and boys as the best of nurses; to all as an amiable and gracious friend. She loved priests as fathers, and monks as brothers. To the poor she was a pious nurse, distributing great alms to them; she was always exhorting youths to religious studies, humbly supplicating the king for the Churches, and for the poor people, and daily commending herself with tears to Christ, the heavenly King.†" Nor will it be an unworthy association, if descending to a lower rank, and to later times, we speak next of Pernelle, wife of Nicolas Flamel, one of these holy matrons, whose charities alone suffice to render them historic personages. The details in her last will are very curious. Besides what was to be given to priests for masses, and to monks, and to brothers serving hospitals, who were to say vigils for her soul, she leaves money to the sick of the hospitals, to orphans, and to poor people, to pilgrims, and to young maidens. All was to be given for God; and no one was forgotten. Neither Martin, who gives the holy water at the door of St. James, her parish Church, nor the five people who are in the habit of sitting at the gate to ask alms, nor the other poor who usually sit close to the pulpit in the Church, during the sermon, nor the little boys whom she specifies by name, nor Jehannette who makes the tapers, nor her servant Gautier, nor Mengin, her young clerk for God.‡ Marie Felice des Ursins, duchess of Mortmorency, used always to make a spiritual

retreat when her husband was absent. Her charities were boundless; she gave pensions to indigent families, sums to hospitals, to prisoners, and to a number of poor confraternities. She laboured to appease enmities, to stop law-suits, to gain pardon for soldiers, to convert people of vicious lives. It is recorded of her, that she could not endure to hear any one criticize a sermon, for every preacher seemed to her worthy of reverence. While in the sorrowful castle of Moulins, she would not reveal a secret which would have injured the cardinal in the king's estimation; nor would she permit her servants to utter a word against her enemies. The princess of Epinoy continued to her last hour, to practise all the exercises of piety; and she was seized with death in the Church, at an early hour of the morning, in her sixty-first year. Maria Theresa, wife of Louis XIV., and daughter of Philippe IV. of Spain, used to make a retreat in some austere community before every great festival of the Church. Of her charities, we shall witness examples in another place, to which the foregoing details might have been referred, could we have wholly separated the justice from the mercy of Christian women, whose angelic ministry sheds such a soft light amidst the dark scenes of war, and civil commotions. Philip Villani says that the Pisan captives, when conducted to Florence, were lodged in the prisons of the community, and were abundantly provided, by good and charitable Florentine women, with all that they wanted. During the recent persecutions of the Church, the devotion of women has fully corresponded with the highest expectations which the mind, nourished with ecclesiastical traditions, could form of its efficacy. Open the pages of a Pacca, and you find that it is women who fly to present their offerings to the captive pontiff at Florence, at Lyons, and at Valence, and who press round to water his feet with their tears; observe what passes at the present day, and it is women who, as at St. Sebastian, are seen to follow the devoted monks with prayers, heroically offered up aloud for their deliverance.

During these late horrors, every Christian woman, in Spain and Portugal, as formerly in France and England, has, according to her ability, and the occasion, repeated the part of the Countess Mathilda towards the clergy, who fled to her for safety, of whom Donizo says,

"Defuit haud ulli, quin profuit optima cunctis,
Non ab ea mœstus, si quis vir venit honestus.

* Orderic. Vitat. Hist. Nor. Lib. VIII.

† Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Benedict. tom. II.

‡ Hist. Critique de Nicolas Flamel et de Pernelle sa femme, p. 297—302.

Unquam præterit, sed consolatus abivit,
Vestibus e sacris multos hæc nota Ducatrix
Patres Catholicos vestisse quidem reminiscor.”*

When history and real life can furnish such pictures, it is not strange that old Romance, and the sense of the Catholic ideal, should represent women invested with the graces of angels.

No marvel that the poets of the middle age in general, should speak like Champier, who says of women,

“ ——— celluy qui en dist blasme
Doit estre réputé infame.”†

When these portraits of female virtues are full of an ineffable charm, still one sees that they only copy from practical living models before them. The same Champier indeed contents himself with adding, “Femmes ont des hommes pitié;” merely confirming the testimony of the Greek poet,

Εχει τοι δυνάμιν εἰς οἶκτον γυνή.‡

But most commonly they dwell at length upon all their characteristic graces. That noble knight, Olivier de La Marche, in his work entitled, “Le Parement et Triomphe des dames d’honneur,” says, that he composed it for one in whom were united “humility, attention, and diligence, perseverance, firm resolve, good thoughts, loyalty, magnanimity, patience, liberality, justice, sobriety, faith, decorous dress, devout memory, charity, remorse of conscience, the fear of God, piety, a horror of evil, prudence, hope, riches of heart, nobility of understanding, acquired by the recollection of death. This,” he adds, “is the habit to triumph, and to be well adorned at all points.” He continues to explain each of these qualities, and in describing the fear of God, gives this admonition :

“Fuyons la cause qui aultruy bien empire
C’est ung péché qui ne peult estre pire.”§

John Marot, in his *Doctrinal des Princesses et nobles Dames*, gives many instructions which express the peculiar female graces, which were then deemed essential, proving clearly how much women then differed from that allegorical personage, described by Guillaume de Lorris, in the romance of the Rose, of whom he says,

* Vita Mathild. Lib. II. c. 2.

† Gouget Bibliothèque Française, tom. X. 136.

‡ Eurip. Iph. in Taur. 1046.

§ Id. tom. IX. 386.

“Car quand bien peignée elle étoit
Bien parée et bien atournée
Elle avoit faite sa journée.”

He enforces the necessity of prudence, liberality, faith, of esteeming learned persons, of using things with moderation, of avoiding idleness, of cherishing gratitude to God, of giving good examples, of not deferring good actions to the approach of death, of maintaining peace, honour, patience, and of prayer to God in spirit and in truth.* Hear what a noble man of the age of chivalry witnesseth. “I have often heard knights say, that when Messire Geoffroy used to ride through the country, when he saw the castle or manor of any lady, he used always to ask to whom it belonged, and when they would reply, it belongs to such a one, if the honour of that lady had incurred a stain, he used to go out of his way as far as half a league to get privately to the gate, which he used to mark with a little piece of chalk, and then ride away.”† In the romances of chivalry, which are true representations of the contemporaneous society, we find the women characterized by a high and uncompromising tone of manners; their lords had no reason to fear the trial of that magic vessel desired by the knight in Ariosto, which showed his consort’s guilt to him that drank, nor their children, the waters of the overflowing Rhine, whose retributive discernment has been the theme of northern legends. When the knight Gallahalt le Bruu had conquered at the tournament under the tower, and had sent to say to the beautiful lady within that it was for the love of her he had conquered, and that he prayed her to send him some gift, great or little; the lady, who of other love besides the love of her husband, had never thought, when she heard that charge, replied to the messenger in these words, “If he hath conquered at the tournament, hath he not had recompense sufficiently high and noble in being held the best knight of all the place? Say to him from me, that I am not a woman to render guerdon to a strange knight. I have my husband, fair and good; he it is who is my friend and my knight; I seek no other but him. All this you will say from me”‡ In general, we are not aware of the extent of learning which was possessed by the women of the middle ages. In old Suabian chronicles, we meet with the duchess Hedwig, in the tenth century, who, in her

* Tom. IX. 26.

† S. Palaye Mém. sur la Chevalerie, l. I. 147.

‡ Gyron le Courtois, f. CCLXIX.

castle of Hohentwiel instructs her husband's nephew, Burkard, who afterwards became Abbot of St. Gall, in the Greek tongue, and in the rules of versification.* Ekehard II. monk of St. Gall, by permission of his abbot, used to visit this castle, in order to teach her Latin, and explain Virgil to her. So learned and studious was the great countess Mathilda known to be, that the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Constantinople, as well as the Roman pontiffs, used to send her their own writings. Donizo, her chaplain, says, that she equalled bishops in application.

"Nullus ea Præsul studiosior invenietur.

Copia librorum non deficit huicve bonorum,
Libros ex cunctis habet artibus atque figuris.
Immemor est nunquam servare statuta secun-
da."†

No accomplishments of erudition, however, were found to spoil the mild graces, or weaken the religious sentiment of these daughters of faith, to each of whom might be applied Lear's description of Cordelia,

"Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low; an excellent thing in woman."

Mary Cajétane Agnesi, after distinguishing herself among mathematicians, chose to hide her literary glories in retreat, devoting herself to the assistance of the infirm and aged poor, in the hospital Trivulzi, at Milan, in which she died. Anne of Brittany, the idol of her country, and the wonder of her age, skilled in astronomy, Greek and Latin, as well as any clerk in her duchy, was another memorable example. In her book of hours she is represented on her knees in prayer, her two daughters standing behind her, and her patron, St. Anne, on her left hand. Celebrated in the domestic histories of Padua was Eleonora Maltraversa, the wife of Papafava Carrara, mother of an illustrious line, and possessed of such wisdom and rare qualities of mind, that noblemen came from all parts of Italy to consult her as an oracle whom they used to find administering medicines to the poor.‡ Who can enter the solemn halls of Padua without being reminded of Helena Piscopia Cornaro, that fair, illustrious and holy woman, clad in the habit of St. Benedict, who possessed a perfect knowledge of the Spanish, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew,

and Arabic languages, who was a poet, a theologian, an astronomer, and who was admitted doctor in philosophy in that university? It was in obedience to the will of her father, in whose house she resided, though always wearing the monastic habit, that she consented to this act, which, by its publicity and singularity wounded her exquisite sense of what belonged to the retiring modesty of her sex. "All ordinary kinds of glory have been reaped by our family," said her father, "nothing remains but this surpassing honour which shall be ours on your compliance." "I obey you," said the saintly daughter, "but I feel that it is making the sacrifice of my life." She only requested as a condition, that the pulpit from which she was to hold forth might be transferred from the hall of the university to our Lady's chapel in the great church. Thither she passed through the learned assembly, which was composed of celebrated men, who had flocked from distant parts of Italy to behold a scene so extraordinary. After accomplishing the exercises to the delight and astonishment of all present, and having received the laurel crown, she hastily withdrew, to escape the applause and admiration of the crowd, but her prophetic words were soon verified. The interior agitation brought on fever, and almost immediately it was perceived that she could not survive the shock. It was in her last moments that the intelligence was received of the defeat of the Turks, and the deliverance of Christendom; but it was too late, or rather joy completed what humility had begun. She expired in a transport of pious gratitude, praising in sublime ejaculations the victorious Christ, and resigning into his hands that chaste, angelic spirit which had fled from its frail tenement through shame at receiving honours which seemed due to him alone. The author of the book entitled on the use of romances, amongst other charges against history, complains that women hardly appear in it. But surely in whatever sense we understand history, the accusation is ungrounded. The virtues of the countess Mathilda were not consigned to the silence that Pericles prescribed, for both in life and death, her fame sounded to the ends of the world. Hear Donizo.

"Sunt ubique boni fuerant sibi maxime noti,
Nam qui trans Pontum, seu Gallicie remorantur,
Christo jure preces, ex ipsa fundere sæpe
Curabant, missos sibi mittebantque benignos."*

The spirit of chivalry, as well as the customs

* Ekehard in Cas. c. 10.

† Vita Mathild. Liv. II. c. 20.

‡ Bernardini Scardeoni Hist. Patavina.

* Vita ejus, Lib. II. c. 20.

and legislation of the feudal age, gave even a political importance to women, which sometimes, perhaps, caused them to occupy a station in society, and to fulfil duties, for which they were neither generally qualified by nature, nor designed by the grace which had delivered them. One old writer styles the countess Mathilda "a military woman;" nevertheless their conduct during the middle ages, in this unfavourable and ambiguous position, constitutes a true miracle of history, of which this very instance is perhaps the most memorable. What a union of virtues in that venerable woman, the empress Agnes, who assumed the reins of government on the death of the emperor, Henry III., his son Henry being only five years old, and held them during five years, displaying consummate prudence, and singular industry,* endeavouring to keep off the gathering storm, and to preserve peace and order, governing with the greatest wisdom, strength, and justice.† This was she to whom the great instructor of the desert, Peter Damian, writes in terms of such praise, after beholding her entry into Rome. "You have come humble to the humble, poor to the poor, as if along with rude shepherds and the rustic throng, to adore the child crying in the manger. Truly to see you then, and those that were with you, was a wondrous spectacle, an example most edifying of the imitation of the Saviour. You had laid aside the insignia of imperial grandeur; you appeared as a lowly penitent; you chose the sufferings of a mortified condition. On seeing you arrive thus, with Hermisinde, your relation, the widow of William, Count of Poitiers, it seemed as if Mary Magdalen came with the other Mary to the sepulchre, not indeed to seek the living among the dead, but to adore the vestiges of him that was risen." Altruda, of the noble and powerful Roman family of Frangipani, the wife of Rainerius, Count of Berthenora, came at the head of a military force which she joined with that of William Marchesalla, of Ferrara, to relieve Ancona, in the year 1172, when it was besieged by Christian of Mayence, arch-chancellor of the emperor, Frederic the First. She is described by Romuald of Salerno, and Andrea Dandolo, in their chronicles, and by Boncampagno, the Florentine, in his book on the siege of Ancona. The latter says, that "in beauty this noble lady shone amongst those who attended on her as the morning star amidst

the others, at the hour of prime." She tells the people of Ancona that after her husband's death, although oppressed with sorrow, she has governed his domains without contradiction. We find, in fact, that she makes great donations to the monks of Camaldoli, for the soul of her husband. She tells the citizens that on hearing of their distress and peril, she has left her castles, towns, and possessions, and has hastened to their succour, leading at her side her only son, a minor, who, though but a boy, being mindful of his father's magnanimity, was inflamed with zeal to come to the assistance and protection of friends.* Who does not recur with delight to what he may have read in old Norman history of that beautiful and wise countess, Sybille, the wife of duke Robert, of whom William of Jumièges says, that "in the absence of the duke, she used to direct the public and private affairs of the province better than the duke would have done if he had been present."† While Robert de Culei, surnamed Burdet, was absent in Italy, his wife, Sybille, daughter of William of Caprea, defended Tarragona. She had no less courage than beauty. During her husband's absence she was full of vigilance. Every night she armed herself with a cuirass like a knight, mounted on the walls, made the tour of the place, and kept the sentinels awake. "What praise," cries Orderic Vitalis, "is due to a young lady who thus serves her husband with faith, by an attentive affection, and who piously governs the people of God with ability and vigilance."‡

In the cathedral of Lucca, on the tomb of Berta, wife of the marquis Adelbert, of Lucca, who died in 925, you may read these lines among others in her praise :

"*Quæ specie speciosa; bono speciosior actu
Filia Lotharii pulchrior ex meritis.
Concilio docto moderabat regmina multa
Semper erat secum gratia magna Dei.*"§

An earlier and perhaps still more beautiful example, was that of St. Bathilda, to whose mild and gracious manners I before alluded, who deserved to be entrusted with that portion of her husband's authority which regarded the protection of the churches, and the consolation of the poor. Charged with the regency on his death, she enfranchised the serfs; but as soon as her son Clotaire III. was of age to reign she has-

* Chronic. Hirsaug.

+ Voigt. Hildebrand, p. 41.

* Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XXX.

† Hist. du Normand. Liv. VIII. 14.

‡ Hist. Nor. Lib. XIII.

§ Italia Sacra, I. 802.

tened to gratify her love of holy retirement, and withdrew to the monastery of Chêlles, which she had founded, and where she lived as a simple nun, devoted to works of piety and charity to the poor, in which house she died in the year 680. Beatrix the great duchess of Tuscany, so often praised by St. Peter Damian, was so highly and universally venerated, that cities contended for her tomb. Muratori transmits the verses of Donizo,* in which he expresses his regret that such a celebrated and holy lady should have her sepulchre in Pisa, an emporium of the East, which hears the perjuries of Pagans, Turks, Africans, and Parthians, who trade there, and which thus contains so many facilities for crime, instead of being entombed in Canossa, which was an eminent city in those days for religion and purity of manners.† What would the ancients have thought of this contention for a woman's grave? Above all, how admirable appears the union of female justice in the middle ages with princely power, in the person of her illustrious daughter, the countess Mathilda? "When the whole world," as Donizo says, with a poetic licence, "was infected with the leprosy of schism, it was a woman in Italy who remained constant to Christ, in the person of Gregory his vicar.

"*Munda domus sola Mathildis erat spaciosa
Catholicis prorsus fuit hæc tutus quasi portus;
Nam quos damnabat rex, pellebat, spoliabat
Pontifices, monachos, clericos, Italos quoque
Gallos
Ad vivum fontem currebant funditus omnes
Scilicet ad dictam Dominam jam mente benignam
Quæque requirebant apud ipsam reperiebant.*"

Her justice deterred the enemies of the Church, who sought to plunder it, and her death will be the signal for letting them loose.

"*Stabant O quanti crudeles atque tyranni
Sub specie justa, noscentes te fore justam:
Qui dissolvuntur, jam pacis fœdera rumpunt
Ecclesias spoliant, nunc nemo vindicat ipsas.*"‡

The lady of old feudal times has ever been fit argument of the poet's strain; witness that of the Last Minstrel, where it presents the lady of Branksome appearing on the castle wall, to answer the summons of the English lords who come to demand the person of Sir William of Deloraine,

* Rer. Italic. Script. tom. V. Vita Mathild. Lib. I. c. 20.

† Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XX.

‡ Vita Mathild. Lib. II. c. 2. and 20.

leading before her eyes her little son, their captive, to whom she makes that grand reply,

"For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid, and God be mine!
Through me no friend shall meet his doom,
Here, while I live, no foe finds room."

At the moment when Sobieski mounted his horse to hasten to the relief of Vienna, during the memorable siege in 1683, when the Turks threatened to conquer this bulwark of Christendom, the queen, holding in her arms the youngest of their children, embraced him, and wept. "What reason have you to weep, madam?" said the king, "I weep," she replied, "because this child is not in a condition to follow you like the rest." Truly when it was a question of defending the holy state of Christendom, or of maintaining justice in the absence of law, in defence of the meek and the oppressed, the high, chivalrous sentiments of nature may have been allowed free scope, and the ideal of Plato's chivalry realized, without incurring the censure of the calm Eternal Wisdom. Such words as those of Clare to Wilton, must then have had a noble import:

"Go then to fight! Clare bids thee go!
Clare can a warrior's feelings know,
And weep a warrior's sigh;
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spur upon thy heel,
And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to die!"

Not, therefore, in the light of an isolated and wholly unprecedented fact, stands in history the heroism of the Maid of Orleans, of which Pasquier says, that, for his part, he regards it as a true miracle of God, an opinion which, in our age of criticism, has been supported by the eloquent pen of Goerres.* Nothing was more in harmony with the spirit of those times, than the spotless purity of her manners in the midst of an army, the ardour with which she resolved to contend for justice, the prowess of her deeds in its support, the wise simplicity of her answers, and the voluntary offering and sacrifice of herself to a cause which she believed to interest heaven. Pasquier alludes to another memorable example of a woman heroically constant in fidelity to the cause of truth and justice. "The history of the constable of St. Pol," says he, "has filled my soul with despatch and compassion. With similar effects have I reviewed the

* Die Jungfrau von Orleans.

tragic history of the Duke of Bourbon ; but now that I come to Mary, queen of Scotland, (and remember what means of information he possessed respecting her,) I seem to have only tears."* Petrarch, in truth, made an unjust restriction, when, in allusion to the two sisters of the Cardinal Colonna, he speaks of the distinguished virtue of the Roman women in general, and says, "It is with reason that they are renowned above their sex ; for they have the tenderness and modesty of women, with the courage and constancy of men." What else was this but the ideal of the Christian woman realized in all Catholic countries during ages of faith ?

Ferdinand, son of King Alphonso, was saved by his wife Isabella, when he had been defeated, and in danger of losing his kingdom. This courageous princess went secretly, disguised as a Capuchin, to find her uncle, the Prince of Tarentum, who was the most formidable of the enemies of her husband, and throwing herself at his feet, appeased him. But here we must distinguish, as the schoolmen say. All the ideas of the middle ages tended to inspire men with aversion for such kind of solicitude as that of the Countess de Penthievre, who made her virtuous husband, Charles of Blois, promise, on leaving Nantes, before the battle of Aurai, in which he lost his life, that he would consent to no accommodation with John de Montfort ; and on the other hand, with love and admiration for that evinced by Jane of Navarre, who, on hearing that her husband, the duke of Brittany, through indignation at the articles proposed by the King of France, had resolved, in despite of danger, on arresting his ambassadors, took up their children in her arms and threw herself on her knees before him, to entreat that he would suffer his wrath to cool, and never rose from the ground, till she had persuaded him to revoke the order.†

These, however, are rare occasions calling forth heroic and extraordinary efforts. It suits our object better to mark the consequences of the thirst for justice, in the fulfilment of the more common duties of those whom nature had designed for the consolation and instruction of domestic life. "Happy the man," cries a French poet, "to whom God grants a holy mother !" Happy the ages, then, of which I attempt the history, which were accustomed to behold multiplied the maternal image in all

the sweetness, strength, and perfection to which faith had exalted nature.

The venerable abbot whom you are about to hear, reader, is the celebrated Guibert de Nogent, who was born in the year 1053, in the castle of Beauvaisis, and when you have heard him describe his mother, you will know in general what was the maternal character during the middle ages. "God of mercy and of sanctity, I render thanks to thee for all thy benefits. At first, I thank thee for having granted me a beautiful, chaste, and modest mother, who was infinitely filled with the fear of thy name. As for her beauty, it is not altogether vain to speak of it. If Sallust had not thought that beauty alone, without morals, might be praised, he would not have said of Aurelia Orestilla that in her, besides beauty, there was nothing good to praise. And, indeed, although an image in relation to faith is said by the apostle to be nothing, nevertheless that apt conformation of members is not undeserving of reasonable praise ; for, although momentaneous beauty is mutable by the instability of blood, as every thing else of imaginary good, yet it cannot be denied to be good ; for whatever is eternally instituted by God is beautiful, and whatever is temporally beautiful, is only as it were a mirror of that eternal beauty which has been witnessed when angels have appeared to men, and which will be seen in the bodies of the elect, when they are made conformable to the brightness of Christ in his transfiguration. I render thee thanks, O God, for having added to her beauty virtue. Thou knowest how thou didst impress her with the fear of thy name, which she found a remedy against all mental diseases ; how she loved domestic retirement, and how careful she was not to condemn others who went much from home ; and when, by strangers or servants, any fables of this kind were related, how she used to turn away, and endeavour by whispers to put a stop to them, being as much afflicted as if it were her own character that was called in question. The virtuous looks of my mother, the fewness of her words, and her constant tranquillity of countenance, were not made to embolden the lightness of those who saw her. It was far less from experience than from a kind of terror with which she was inspired from on high, that she learned to detest sin ; she used often to tell me that she had so penetrated her soul with the dread of a sudden death, that on coming to a more advanced age, she bitterly regretted that she no longer felt in her aged heart

* Recherches de la France, Liv. VI. 15.

† Lobineau Hist. de Bret. VIII.

those same agitations of pious terror which she had felt in an age of simplicity and ignorance. In the eighth month after my birth, my father, according to the flesh, passed away. Although my mother was then in the brilliant lustre of her beauty, she resolved to remain a widow. What great examples of modesty did she then give! Living in an extreme fear of the Lord, and with an equal love for her neighbours, especially those who were poor, she governed us and our goods prudently. Her mouth was so accustomed to recall without ceasing the name of her deceased husband, that it seemed as if her soul had never any other thought; for whether in praying, or in distributing alms, or even in the most ordinary acts of life, she continually used to pronounce the name of this man, which showed that her mind was always occupied with him. She offered daily sacrifices for his soul, and gave great alms, and she often beheld him in visions, which, as they did not inspire her with any security, but merely excited her solicitude, must no doubt have come from God, and from those angels who have care of the dead. She was assiduous in repairing to the churches, being never on the common occasions absent from the nocturnal offices. At her own expense, she maintained, with humble faith, a lamp perpetually burning in the church of St. Ledger. She learned the seven penitential psalms by heart, not by reading, but by hearing them. She was universally venerated, and being much visited by noble men and women, on account of her amiable and gracious conversation, she used, when they went away, to have great scruples lest she should have uttered any less true or idle word. Thou knowest, O God, with what purity and holiness she brought me up, not sparing even to clothe my little body in the pomp of raiment, that I might seem to equal courtly or royal boys. Neither sleeping nor waking, did her solicitude for me ever cease. At length, on St. Gregory's day, she sent me to school to learn grammar, from a man who could not, indeed, teach me what he did not know himself, but from one who was most careful to preserve me in virtue. For with whatever was modest, with whatever was chaste, with whatever was part of exterior elegance, he most faithfully and lovingly imbued me. In after years, when I was elected abbot, thou knowest, O God, how much she was afflicted; for what others deemed a source of honour, was to her matter of intolerable

grief; because she did not wish me to be exposed so young to so many dangers, especially knowing that I was ignorant of forensic things, having devoted myself exclusively to letters. One would have thought that the admonitions which she gave me on this occasion, and her predictions also, must have come, not from an illiterate woman, but from a most learned bishop. When my mother at length was seized with her last illness, both my brother and I were absent at Nogent: God spared her tenderness and ordered all for the best. When my old master, who had assumed the religious habit, weeping stood by her death-bed, and said, 'Lo your sons are far away, and perchance you are grieved that you should die during their absence;' she replied, looking on him fixedly, 'Had they even remained within the adjacent cloister, God knows that I wish neither them nor any other of my relations to be present at my death. There is only One, whom with all my strength I worship; only One whose presence I desire now.' The same night she departed, not ungratefully, as we believe, to the embraces of her God.*

Happy ages, when God gave men holy mothers. Happy the men in modern times who has not occasion to seek for them in the chronicles of the past. "There sleep," says a poet in our days, speaking of his mother's grave; "sixty years devoted to one single thought,—of a life past in doing good; of innocence, of love, of hope, of purity. What aspirations towards her God! what faith in death, what virtues in earnest of immortality! How many sleepless nights spent in alleviating pain! How many pleasures renounced in order to assist poverty! How many tears, at all times ready to flow and mingle with the tears of others; how many sighs after another country; and how much patience to endure a life of which the crown was elsewhere?" This was the mother of the middle ages; on beholding which I feel a tear spring up by pious memory waked, though time steals even sorrows from the heart, doubtless because they were sweeter than any joy. Cold judgment and the sense of goodness are all that remain, where it was once thought that impassioned love and devoted tenderness must have been eternal.

If you would seek other examples from

* Guiberti Abb. de Novigento de Vita propria, Lib. I. 11.

the same history, your search need not be long. There you will behold the illustrious and pious matron Willa, mother of Theobald, who renounces all the consolations of home and country, and flies to the desert of Salonica, on the first tidings of her long-lost son having been discovered there under a hermit's cowl, and there she serves God with him till death makes the separation.* There you will see Muriel, the first wife of Tancred de Hauteville, who, says the old chronicle, was beautiful, strictly virtuous, and in conversation most holy; worthy of perpetual memory, and wondrously praised and extolled by all men. There you will see Frascade, too, his second wife, who made no distinctions in her love between her own children and those of the former marriage; so that it was impossible to discover by her manner which were her own.

During the middle ages, it was often necessary to find an apology rather for the abundance of maternal affection, than for its absence; and yet the passage of St. Ambrose, to which holy men had recourse on these occasions, must have been the more satisfactory, as it held up to them so faithful a mirror, in which they could discern how the spirit and manners which prevailed around them were often superior to the type of nature. "Consider," says the holy bishop, "what the mother of Zebedee's children sought with and for her sons. It is a mother solicitous for the honour of her sons, of whose vows indeed the measure is immoderate, and yet it should be pardoned; it is a mother far advanced in age, studiously religious, destitute of consolation; arrived at that stage when she ought to be assisted or nourished by her offspring, and yet she suffers them to be absent from her, and prefers to her own pleasure that they should deserve the recompense of having followed Christ; for at the first word of the Lord calling them, they had left their nets and followed him. Moved, therefore, by the indulgence of maternal affection, she besought the Saviour, saying, 'Grant that my sons may sit the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy kingdom.' Although it was an error, yet it was an error of piety; for the bowels of a mother are strangers to patience, and although greedy in vows, yet the cupidity is pardonable which is not greedy of money

but of grace; nor is it a shameless petition which consults not for herself but for her children. Consider the mother, think upon the mother. Christ considered the love of the mother, whose old age was consoled by the recompense of the sons, which though wearied by maternal desires, endured the absence of the dearest pledges. Consider also the woman, that is, the weaker sex, whom the Lord had not as yet confirmed by his own passion. Consider, I say, the heir of that first woman Eve, who was transfused into all, sinking under the weight of immoderate cupidity, whom the Lord had not as yet redeemed with his own blood, nor as yet delivered by his death from the long-accustomed affections and appetite of power. The woman, therefore, failed in following an hereditary error."*

The Christian manners, in regard to young women, prescribed the reverse of what was required by the customs of Sparta. It appears from St. Chrysostom, that before marriage, women lived in retreat. "How," he asks, "can a man know beforehand, the character and defects of the woman that he is to marry, since till that moment, custom requires that she should live in retreat, and in the habit of restraining herself."† During the middle ages, the same discipline prevailed, and Rubichan observes, that even in modern times, these young pensioners from convents have been led to the altar in preference to others who had been taught by their ostentatious education, to assume the forms of a Greek statue, when accompanying themselves on the harp, and to fix a date of chronology, with the skill of an academician.

Yet, in the women of the middle ages, was not wanting the spirit which had been the admiration of antiquity; nor when occasions required, the corresponding deed which had been immortalized in the poetry of Greece. There were still Antigonas, though there were not as yet, Belindas. William Campisamperio of Padua, after spending his first year in prison, on his escape, took arms against the tyrant Eccelino, from whose cruel yoke he sought to free his country. But being betrayed by Alberico, who had only pretended to be the tyrant's foe, he was again cast into prison, and finally beheaded in the public square of Padua, where, by order of Eccelino, his body was left on the ground to

* Liv. V. *fide* de cap. 2.

† Tractat. de Virginitate.

+ Annal. Camaldulens, Lib. XVII.

be devoured by dogs. That night, however, while no man durst remove it, all his relations and friends being proscribed, came Daria, the beautiful daughter of Count Albert of Baone, with the daughter of Gerard de Campisamperio, and some other ladies, who taking it up, carried it to the Basilica of St. Antonio, and there, with lighted tapers, and as much solemn rite as was consistent with secrecy and despatch, placed it in a holy grave.*

St. Jerome says, that a daughter should not go to the Basilicas of the martyrs, unless in company with her mother.† In this respect, during the ages of faith, we are again presented with the manners of the old poetic world, for of the feminine boldness which belongs to a certain style of education in later times, we find no trace in Homer. When all the companions of Nausicaa fled on the approach of Ulysses, the poet expresses the modesty of Nausicaa by saying, that she remained because Minerva had filled her mind with courage.‡ At present, perhaps, on such an occasion the instruction of a goddess would not be required.

It must not be inferred, however, that the meek daughters of the Catholic discipline in the middle ages, were deficient in graces, corresponding to the charms with which they had been endowed by nature.

At no time is there any thing wholly isolated or solitary in morals or genius; and, therefore, we may infer much respecting the character of noble women of the middle ages, from beholding the portrait of that Laura, whom the verses of Petrarch have immortalized. Her piety in days of youthful joy, rising to matins, and leaving her chamber only for the Church, her union of beauty and sanctity, her calm resignation in sorrow, the justice and grace which marked all her ways, "Her words," says Petrarch, "had the dignity of nature, and her voice was a source of continual enchantment; soft angelic, and divine, it could appease the wrath, dissipate the clouds, and calm the tempests of the soul," her firmness of purpose, and strength of judgment, when to show her sense of a breach of honour, she left marks of it in her will, in reference to a child who had offended, her modesty and humility, never being puffed up with vanity from her birth, her beauty,

or the celebrity she derived from the praises of Petrarch, whom she only sought to lead to heaven by a life of grace!—all these were more than the features of an individual; for they were characteristics of whole generations. Did any one wish to learn in what exactly consisted the becoming? He was referred for instruction to noble women; that soft and susceptible race, possessed intuitively with exquisite acuteness, the secret of all justice. The simple infantine and joyous air of the maidens of the middle ages, is still witnessed, we are told, in those of Spain, whose charms and graces from being without any mixture of what in France and England is termed education, are said to inspire an unwonted and supreme delight,* as those who have only seen artificial beds of flowers, are enraptured on discovering the wild blossom of the mountains, or the bright, exquisite gem which sparkles on the dark green borders of the sleepless stream. The women of the middle ages sought no power to charm from Tarentine robe, which was a term of reproach even among Gentiles. Byron is struck with somewhat of reverence, as well as delight, at the dress of the Spanish women, when he makes that admirable remark respecting the air of mysticism, and of gaiety, which belongs to them; and whoever has beheld those beautiful white forms, kneeling like the women of Genoa in churches, veiled, will have no difficulty in conceiving his emotions.

General simplicity in dress was found compatible with occasional magnificence, as the old poet said of the Dame de Fayel:

"La Dame s'est tost acemée,
Car belle dame est tost parée."

The air of hardy plainness which reigned in all private relations, agreed well with beauty. The daughters of those times had no zone that caught the eye more than the person did, no frontlets as if one wished to deck the sun with jewels. In church, and in all honourable places, women generally appeared wrapped up in white folds, over which was thrown a long black mantle.† It is thus we find them represented in old glass windows, and miniatures; and the habit of some orders of nuns is only the same which has remained unchanged. The duties, even the recreations

* Bernardini Scardionii Hist. Patavinæ, Lib. III. 13. † Epist. LVII. ‡ Od. VI. 139.

* Huber Skizzen aus Spanien, p. 40.
† Hldefons von Arx Geschichten des St. Gallen.

of women, were humble and private. It was, as with the Greeks, in the time of Æschylus, when no woman ever went to the theatre, though a foolish tale passed current in later times, respecting their terror on the entrance of the chorus of furies in the Eumenides. Innocent delight and duty went hand in hand, in sweet conformity with the design of nature. The discipline which Cicero ascribes to all cities but Sparta, by which women were confined within the shade of walls, and rendered incapable of any active exercise by the softness of their habits, did not prevail in the middle ages. Those who, like Nausicaa, had brothers in the bloom of youth, who always wished to have fresh washed clothes going to the chorus, were led sometimes by the employments that devolved upon them to the margin of rivers and fountains, where the fragrant air, and the lovely aspect of groves and meadows, supplied refreshment, and the pleasure most congenial to innocence. Spinning was another occupation belonging to all women of the middle ages. Shepherdesses spun at cottage doors, listening to romantic tales; the daughters of citizens spun in their court yards, while some old relative read aloud from a spiritual book; princesses spun on the balconies of palaces, listening to the music of instruments, or the song of the minstrel; nuns spun after matins, seated under the arcades of their cloister. The holy queen Adelaide, mother of king Robert, used to take a pride in working with her own hands, in embroidering for the ornaments of churches. Every church and monastery in the middle ages could boast of some delicate work which attested the ingenious skill as well as piety, of the maidens and matrons of the adjoining manor. Upon opening in the abbey of St. Denis, the tomb of Jean de Bourbon, wife of king Charles V., there were found the remains of a crown, a gold ring, and a spindle or distaff of wood gilt, half decayed, the symbol of domestic occupations. Olaus Magnus, Archbishop of Upsal, relates, that "the women of the North, in point of execution, though perhaps not in the choice of a subject, excelled even the Roman artists in the work of tapestry; for that even illustrious women, in order to avoid idleness, used to exercise a subtle skill in making as it were hereditary ornaments for their houses."* The husband,

* Olai Magni gentium Septent. Hist. Lib. XIII. c. 9.

indeed, as the days of Æschylus, was what Minerva calls the eye of the house, *δομῶν ἐπίσκοπον*.* Rarely in the middle ages could any man ascribe his everlasting doom, like Rusticucci, if we credit Dante, to the savage temper which rebelled against his just domestic sway. "Nevertheless," as Clemens Alexandrinus observes, "the ring was given to the spouse as a symbol of domestic custody and administration, that she should seal up the things that were in the house."†. The husband was not absorbed in domestic engagements; he had still generosity for his friend, and heroism for the cause of justice. There are few Anthonios in cities that have advanced in the manners of modern civilization, though there may be a sufficient number of Shylocks. Accordingly we find that heroic love entered generally into the marriages of the middle ages. Even in the romances of chivalry, the knights are continually speaking, in their perilous passages, like Turnus to his friends in the moment of danger—

— "Nunc conjugis esto
Quisque suæ tectique memor: nunc magna referto
Facta patrum laudesque."‡

The spirit which presided over marriages in the middle age was not mercenary nor political, nor choked with ambition of the meaner sort. The maxim of the Pythagoreans, "to avoid a woman who had gold on her person,"§ seemed to prevail in all its force. Down to the fourteenth century, in France the dowry of women was a chaplet of roses; the fortune of men was their worth, their heroism, their spotless honour, or even their learning and wisdom. A dowry was no more essential during the middle ages than it was in Homeric times, when a daughter for being beautiful and expert and prudent, might reckon upon gaining for her husband the best man in wide Troy. "Hippodameia" says Homer, "was beloved by her father and mother above all their daughters."

— *πάσαν γὰρ ὁμηλικὴν ἐκέαστο
κάλλει καὶ ἀργουσιν ἰδὲ φρεσὶ τούνεκα καὶ μὲν
γῆμεν ἀνὴρ ὠριστος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ.*||

Giroie, sprung from the two noble families of the Franks and Bretons, to whom

* Eumenid. 740.

† Clem. Alex. Pedag. Lib. III. c. 2.

‡ X. 280.

§ Jamblich de Pythagoric vita, cap. 18.

|| Il. XIII. 431.

duke Richard had given the two castles in Normandy, of Montreuil and of Echanfour, while on his journey to find the duke, was received and lodged in the house of Toustain de Montfort, and having merely seen by chance at dinner Gisele, the daughter of that knight, without any inquiry he demanded her in marriage from her illustrious parents, and obtained her for his wife.* Such disregard was shown to the interest arising from family connections, that we find the German nobles of the tenth century censured by the fourth Eckehard, Abbot of St. Gaul, for choosing wives out of Italy and Greece, to the neglect of the German daughters.† "Virtue is all the dowry that you need leave your daughter," says Marcellus Ficinus to Berlingherio;‡ In the fifteenth century, we find the preachers of Italy laying great stress upon observing the ancient simplicity in relation to marriages. Bernardine of Monte Feltro preaching at Tuderta, on the manner of the Christian life, showed the necessity of moderating the dower of daughters, and of renouncing great expenses in the celebration of nuptials.§ Moreover, we find that the great importance of attending to spiritual or intellectual interests in the formation of alliances, was not overlooked. Stephen, King of Hungary, sought Gisele, daughter to the emperor Henry, in marriage, but he could not obtain her father's consent till he had embraced the Christian religion. This was the Stephen who, once converted, turned himself to Christ with all his heart, and became a mirror of all sanctity.|| The traditions of the first ages had perpetuated the spirit of the primitive Christians in this respect even when the occasion for some of these precautions had ceased. The dangers resulting to the Christian woman who should become the wife of a Pagan, are bitterly lamented by St. Cyprian and Tertullian; the latter says, "The husband wishes to go to the bath, the wife wishes to observe the station; the husband gives a banquet, the wife is obliged to fast; and there is never so much to do in the house as when the wife wishes to go to the church. What Pagan," he asks, "would wish to permit his wife to go about through the villages, to enter strange houses, to

visit the brethren, that is the sick and the poor? Who would wish to permit them to carry water to wash their feet, provisions and drink to offer them? There are times of persecution too, and who would consent that his wife should visit in secret the prisons in order to kiss the chains of the martyrs?" Then again what new difficulties when Christian daughters were born to the Pagan husband, and Christian sisters to Pagan brothers; for in these mixed marriages, the daughters almost always followed the religion of the mother. Victoria of Abitina, a city near Carthage, made a vow of perpetual chastity, because her father wished to oblige her to marry a Pagan. Then what trials awaited the female slaves who embraced Christianity; what dangers from their masters, and the sons of their masters! When these masters hated Christianity, what a life of misery was theirs! Thus the master of St. Potamienne of Alexandria, being unable to seduce her, denounced her as a Christian to the proconsul Aquila, who condemned her to a cruel punishment. Pagan slaves could find shelter from the fury of their masters in the Pagan temples, but it is evident that Christians could not avail themselves of this resource. The council of Elvira in 305, declares that "the number of young persons who may remain unmarried, cannot excuse those parents who cause Christian virgins to contract a marriage with idolaters." Still there were many such marriages. These Christian women were not excluded the church, but the church did not bless their union with the Pagans, which was but a civil marriage. In short, Christian women, in primitive times, suffered in their pagan homes what many pious Catholic women of the later ages endure when placed in houses, which, if not Pagan in profession, are such in fact: dependant upon fathers, brothers, husbands, and masters, who either do not profess their faith, or what is perhaps worse, as in France, have contracted a hatred for the very religion which they are supposed to profess.* Now it is true, that such occasions for constancy did but very seldom and partially exist during the middle ages when all the world was united in one religion, and when Christian manners were defended against the few by the force of public opinion. Still whenever occasion did arise, we find that due atten-

* William of Jumièges Hist. du Normand. Lib. VII. c. 11.

† Eckehard in Lib. Bened. 122.

‡ Epist. Lib. VII.

§ Wadd. Ann. Minorum, tom. XIV.

|| Anual Hirsaugiensis.

* Frederick Munter. Die Christen in heidnischen Hause. Copenhagen, 1828.

tion was paid to the intellectual and moral interests in all the relations of domestic life. The master of the sentences expressly teaches and shows from the holy fathers, that a marriage ought never to be contracted between those who are of different religions.*

"In choosing a husband," says St. Isidore, "four things are generally regarded, virtue, race, beauty, and wisdom; but of these wisdom is the most effectual to cause love. Thus Dido loved Æneas for his beauty,

'Quem sese ore ferens;'

for his virtue,

'Quam forti pectore et armis;'

for his wisdom of discourse,

— 'Heu quibus ille
Jactatus fatis, quæ bella exhausta canebat;'

for his race,

'Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse Deorum.'†

Certainly there are not wanting examples in ancient history to show that it was the philosophy, the poetic or literary fame, rather than the beauty of the youth, which won the maiden's heart,—that intellectual enjoyments entered into the idea of love's qualifications, and that the loves of the middle ages resembled those of which the poet sung,

τῇ σοφίᾳ παρὶδρους
παρτοίας ἀπερὰς ἐνυπνίου;‡

Hence we find Marsilius Ficinus telling his young friend, the poet Antonio Pelocta, that marriage will be no impediment to his study of letters, if he lives temperately, and economizes his time.§ The husband of the middle ages in fact was looked up to, according to apostolic prescriptions, as the instructor of the house; he was not the husband of the civilization which some modern sophists advocate. He rather resembled the son of Abraham, who introduced the woman that he loved into the tabernacle of Sara, his mother, and took her to be his wife, and so loved her, "ut dolorem, qui ex morte matris ejus acciderat, temperaret."||

* Sentent. Lib. IV. distinct 39.

† Isidori Etymolog. Lib. IX. c. 8.

‡ Eurip. Med. 841.

§ Marsil. Ficini Epist. Lib. IV.

|| Genes. xxiv. 67.

Here my discourse might recal the song which Dante heard in the region where spirits are made pure, that

"Many a pair extoll'd,
Who lived in virtue chastely, and the bonds
Of wedded love."•

Roger, king of Sicily, was reduced to such a state of bitter affliction on the death of his wife Alberia, that for a long time he shut himself up in his private rooms, and would see no one but his familiar servants, so that it became the general opinion of men, both far and near, that he had died, and some nobles made an insurrection; and whoever affirmed that he was still alive was laughed at.†

We cannot enter any of our ancient cathedral or monastic churches, without meeting some monument proclaiming, in terms more or less beautiful, the tenderness and constancy of the same affection during the middle ages. The love of the celebrated Balthazar Castiglione for his wife, is thus expressed in the inscription which he caused to be placed upon her tomb, in the church of S. Maria delle Grazie, near Mantua:

"Non ego nunc vivo, conjux dulcissima; vitam
Corpore namque tuo fata meam abstulerunt;
Sed vivam, tumulto cum tecum condar in isto,
Jungenturque tuis ossibus ossa mea."

I have recorded the affection of men; but what shall I say of the woman's love? Blanca Rubea, of Padua, having fallen into the hands of the tyrant Eccelino, when the fortress was taken, in defending which her husband had been slain, sought to escape by throwing herself from a window, but was reserved to give an example to all future ages of heroic perseverance; for when his crime was consummated, after all attempts to corrupt her mind had failed, dissembling her grief, she demanded permission to view once more the remains of her husband; and entering the sepulchre, where bloody and yet but green in earth he lay festering in his shroud, she resolved, as if unsubstantial death were amorous, and that the lean, abhorred monster kept him there in dark to be her paramour, to stay with him, and never from that place of dim night depart again. Bidding her eyes to look their last, she

• Purg. XXV.

† Alexand. Abbat. de reb. gestis Rogerii, Lib. III. c. 1. Ber. Italic. Scriptor. tom. V.

cast herself with such force upon the corpse, now half dissolved upon the cold stone, that her arms took their last embrace, and with a kiss she died.*

Veronica da Gambera, a poetess and patroness of learning, daughter of Count Gian-Francesco Gambera, was married to Gilberto, the tenth lord of Corregio, whom she lost nine years after their marriage, when she was scarcely thirty-three years of age. She caused to be engraven on the door of her apartment these beautiful lines:

"Ille meos primus qui me sibi junxit amores
Abstulit, ille habeat secum servetque sepulcro."

Orlandini, gonfalonier of justice at Florence, meditated deadly vengeance against Balbaccio, a brave warrior of the republic, for having expressed indignation at his cowardice in flying from Marradi on the invasion of Piccinnino. The gonfalonier concealed the assassins in his chamber, where Balbaccio came every day to receive his orders. Orlandini conversing familiarly, walked with him to the fatal spot at the end of the room, then gave the signal, when the assassins rushed out and despatched him. His body was thrown out of the window, and afterwards exposed to the people. His widow, Anne, devoted herself from that moment, to a life of religion. She changed her house into a monastery, and shutting herself up there with many noble women, continued there till her death, which was in odour of sanctity. "This monastery," adds Machiavel, "which bears her name, will perpetuate her memory till the end of time."†

The horror which was inspired by every violation of this union, shows what was the general opinion and practice of those times. Many memorable scenes were the result of these contrasts. Let us imagine ourselves present at the Council of Rheims, at which Pope Calixtus the Second assisted, and mark what takes place on the third day. Hildegard, countess of Poitiers, enters with a numerous suite of ladies and guards; she is a princess of great beauty, of about thirty years of age; tears stand in her eyes, which she wipes away from time to time. She makes an eloquent and feeling harangue, complaining that her husband has forsaken her, to the great scandal of the Church. The whole assem-

bly is moved to compassion. The Pope asks, if the Count is present, conformable to the order sent to him to attend; the bishop of Saintes explains the reason of his prince's absence, who has been delayed on his road by sickness. The Pope then fixes a time for him to appear to hear his sentence of excommunication, unless he should take back his countess. The love and respect of which women generally were the objects during the middle ages, might alone be deemed a sufficient proof of the eminent sense of virtue and justice which belongs to them.

At the time of the Crusades, when the armies of Europe were to assist at the spectacle of Mahometan manners and of the religion of sense, there was reason to fear that their condition in that respect might suffer a sad reverse; but, as a French writer remarks, it was precisely at that epoch, when the sweet and persuasive voice of St. Bernard, celebrating the praise of Mary, furnished an antidote to the fascination of the ancient Oriental serpent, and offered to its impure seduction the enthusiasm of chivalrous love. There are single deeds which show the general spirit of these times, and which we find upon every tongue, as symbols of universal duty, where knightly or manly virtue was the theme. Such was the act of Bruce, to which Isabella alludes, in the poem of the Lord of the Isles.

"Robert! I have seen
Thou hast a woman's guardian been!
Even in extremity's dread hour,
When press'd on thee the Southern power,
And safety, to all human sight,
Was only found in rapid flight,
Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
In agony of travail pain,
And thou didst bid thy little band
Upon the instant turn and stand,
And dare the worst the foe might do,
Rather than, like a knight untrue,
Leave to pursuers merciless
A woman in her last distress."*

While the Church protected women from injury, the laws of the state contributed to preserve in society the delicate impressions of respect which were their due, and punished any insult by severe penalties. When grave and austere magistrates came forward, like Stephen Pasquier, declaring that they would rather incur any censure than resemble John de Mehun, who, in his romance of the Rose, had professed expressly to despise women,† it cannot

* Bernardini Scardeonii Hist. Patavinæ The-saur. Antiq. Ital. tom. VI.

† Hist. of Florence, Lib. VI.

* IV. + Recherches de la France, Lib. VI. 34.

excite surprise to find knights and noblemen resisting as personal outrage, the publication of any thing that tended to weaken the faith of female virtue.

The learned and amiable Antony Woodville, earl of Rivers, had translated from the French "The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers," in which he left out some strictures on women, that were in the original. These Caxton translated, inserting them as an appendix to his printed edition, with many apologies for the correction. "I did not presume," he says, "to put them in my said lord's book, but in the end apart, in the rehearsal of the works, that Lord Rivers, or any other person, if they be not pleased may erase it, or else rend the leaf out of the book, humbly beseeching my said lord to take no displeasure on me so presuming."

Alas, reader, how strange, how extravagant and absurd, perhaps, will this sound in the ears of many at present, whom like deaf adders, the harmonious voice of exquisite sentiment can no longer charm? The leaf which our fathers would have torn out and trampled upon with indigna-

tion, would now be thought the sweetest and most attractive page that could be presented to any eye. Erase it, indeed, or else rend it out of the book! Such counsel is no longer in harmony with our opinions or our manners. It was for the gentle ones of Catholic times to follow it, who were taught nothing else in philosophy, in literature, in poetry, in painting, and in the whole development and order of society, but that from woman arose upon them the sun of justice,—Christ their God. It was for the men of the middle ages to feel that scorn, who beheld woman, angel-like, leading youth hand in hand to heaven, meanwhile distributing on earth the palms of virtue, as arbitress and judge. It was for them to feel indignant, who could from experience and conviction say of woman,

"All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows."

No, Caxton, thy book is safe at present, come what may hereafter. Onward let us pass.

CHAPTER IV.



HE shadowy forms that are now before us, indicate that we are come to a scene that may for me be termed the passage perilous, of which old fables speak. Love, that in gentle hearts is quickly learnt, pleased so passing well the heroic ages of which I tell the manners, that, as thou perceivest, reader, I cannot pursue my journey without beholding it; for the image is too intimately connected with the times I describe, to be excluded from any picture that would faithfully represent them. Nevertheless, though with downward looks, we have encouragement to proceed; for if, by sweet thoughts and fond desire many to an evil pass were destined, there were others, and doubtless

not a few in these simple ages, whose smiles or sighs can be remembered without exciting grief or pity.

In the vain fabling of the ancients, the distinctions of nature are often truly indicated. "Love," says Plato, "is not one person, but there are two loves, the one elder and born without a mother, the daughter of Ouranus, the most ancient of all the gods, and we call this Uranian love; but the other younger, daughter of Jupiter and Dione, which we call public or common, and this of itself is neither good nor evil, but it may be either, according as it is accompanied; and thus all love is not fair or worthy to be praised. The common love is what belongs to the evil part of men, who have no regard to what

is well or otherwise, but regard only their senses, whereas the elder love binds men to the soul. The former, which regards the body rather than the soul, is evil, for it is not durable, being related to a matter which is not durable, ceasing with its departure, and containing in itself nothing fixed or permanent unless the total want of generous friendship.* We find this distinction as clearly pointed out by the writers of the middle ages, though differently expressed. In allusion to the latter, Richard of St. Victor uses an image, which Dante seems to have copied in his representations of hell; for he says, "men hate in loving, and love in hating; and in a wondrous and wretched manner, hate grows from desire and desire from hate. Fire and hail mixed are their portion. And what is this but a certain form of future damnation, where spirits pass from the heat of fire to the cold of snow, and from the cold of snow to the heat of fire? When the human mind is drawn violently to this state of love, nothing remains but that it should be prayed for by others, if perchance the Lord, looking on their faith, should restore the dead to life."† On the other hand, speaking of the former, the same great master observes, "than the sweetness of love nothing is found pleasanter, nothing from which the mind derives a more lively joy."‡ If this were not a matter on which faith had thrown a new light, there would have been, however, no necessity for our approaching these dangerous and doubtful limits. But during the middle ages there is a wondrous change to be remarked in the development and exercise of human passions; for the love which Plato rejects, seemed to have then acquired many qualities which before had been exclusively possessed by that which he called the older or Uranian love. Like it, this passion of the sentient nature bound men to the soul, and contained in itself something durable, being allied to a generous and immortal friendship. Nay, like that which was amongst the oldest of things, it was capable of becoming, as Phædrus says, "a cause of the greatest good to men."

In the first place, it was associated with that restoration of the dignity and happiness of the female sex, which had been effected by the Christian faith, and by the discipline and laws of the Catholic Church.

* Conviv. 9. 10.

† Rich. de S. Vict. Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ charitatis, I.

‡ De Trinitate, I. III. 14.

Plutarch says, in one of his moral works, that "as for true love, women have no part in it;" and Montesquieu observes that Plutarch speaks the universal opinion of his age. What language! what an age! Moreover, we find that immediately on the diffusion of the Christian faith, love became associated with the hopes of a future and immortal existence, as may be witnessed in the visions of Hermas, who records the recollections of his early love; and describes his seeing the heavens open, as he knelt one day praying in a meadow, and beholding the maid whom he had loved looking out of the clouds to salute him. Truly there was a justice in love, which, under the divine forms of the Catholic religion, gave rise to ineffable relations that did so evenly temper passion within mortal breasts, it ne'er could warp to any wrongfulness. From the day when first discourse was heard of the revered sire, before whom knelt the maiden who had heard the secret vow of faithful and devoted affection, earthly things seemed joined to divine in a still more intimate manner than they had ever been before in the hearts of the young. The dulcet strains of holy choirs, which had even in childhood thrilled them, acquired a deeper and still sweeter sense, and the vitam venturi sæculi, thrice shouted forth in solemn harmony, was like an authoritative voice proclaiming that they espoused a loveliness that was to be in bliss and safety everlasting. To be convinced that this union between the two loves had been realized, we need only consult any of the popular writers or poets of the middle age, who seem to know of no love which was not a principle of virtue, or almost a source of sanctification to the soul. Love in the sense of chivalrous manners co-operated with religion in making men despise riches and earthly grandeur, and submit cheerfully to a life of hardship, and cultivate that noble spirit of sacrifice which plays such an important part in the whole of Catholic life. That reply to Juliet would have found an echo in every youthful breast,

"Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content if thou wilt have it so:
I have more care to stay than will to go:
Come death and welcome! Juliet wills it so."

Huber says that in the young Spaniard who would render himself amiable in the common walks of life, moderation and temperance in every thing are an indispen-

sable qualification. Avarice, or what the Spaniards name *Miseria*, would not dishonour him more than drunkenness or effeminacy. If you will credit writers of the middle ages, love made young men gentle and humble, devoted and generous. They will tell you that there moved a hidden virtue from the heart of woman which, like a heavenly influence, prompted them to everything well and fair; that as the partiality or peculiar devotion for particular altars or chapels evinced by the angelic maiden, seemed to enhance the reverence of those who loved them for the same, so did they cast a perfume, an air of paradise over the most ordinary actions. The ancient writers love to remark how the Catholic religion supplied the young as they passed on through the different stages and relations of life, at the entrance of every new sphere, with some principle, the observance of which was calculated to endear them to others. The working of these divine wheels produced sweet music, ever varied and alike unearthly, even when it seemed to attach men by fresh bonds to the earth. It made them assiduous scholars, joyous and generous companions, disinterested and faithful lovers, affectionate husbands, benignant and wise fathers, courageous and free subjects, merciful and just rulers, and by domestic virtues secured the public tranquillity; for fearful is the void left in society when, in place of the loving and gentle affections, the sweet charities, the amiable relations of life, springing from the experienced or remembered love of young hearts, is substituted cold and passionless reason, or hatred like that of demons, and pride such as reigned in fallen angels plotting to be gods. What renders, however, the love of the middle ages, a phenomenon wholly unprecedented in the moral history of man, was the supernatural tone which was imparted to it by faith in the doctrines of the Catholic religion.

"I bless the happy moment," says Petrarch, "that directed my heart to Laura. She led me to see the path of virtue, to detach my heart from base and grovelling objects; from her I am inspired with that celestial flame which raises my soul to heaven, and directs it to the Supreme Cause, as the only source of happiness." If Plutarch, in the passage formerly quoted, speaks the sense of his contemporaries, it is not less true that Petrarch, in these words, expresses the opinion of the middle ages, with regard to the nature and con-

sequences of love. After reading the works of Richard of St. Victor, and other great contemplatists of that time, one might suppose that love could not be severed from charity, which is the destruction of all vices. The maiden that was chosen by the heroic youth of those times, she to whom he would plight his troth, though to have her and death were both one thing, had always a chaplet in her hands, and as she smiled, her thoughts seemed ever fixed upon the joy of angels. She would have given counsel like Beatrice to Dante, when he beheld her with such rapture of celestial bliss, that affection found no room for other wish.

"Vanquishing me with a beam
Of her soft smile, she spake: 'Turn thee, and list:
These eyes are not thy only paradise.'"^{*}

In love all her wish was innocence, all
her thoughts were prayer:

"I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which well thou know'st is cross and full of sin."

Such is the timid language of that love which inspired the genius of the middle ages; for hear the great master who represents it, and who was himself its most glorious image, "Love awakens and excites us; it gives us wings to fly to the highest regions, and oft its burning flame is the first stage, where the soul, ill at ease here below, rises to the Creator. All its desires are lofty; it can purify the soul." It is thus that Michael Angelo conceives the love of woman.[†] And who need be reminded of the noble sense in which the bards of chivalry and the authors of knightly romance understood love? It is their sentiment which is expressed by the modern poet:

"Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?"

In the palmerin of England, the knight of death, when he had lost his fair love, would still always carry about her image, at the sight of which he went forth to his adventures, with as lively a regard to her honour as though she still smiled upon him.

If you would estimate the sensibility of the middle ages, and learn what impressions affection caused in them, you should hear some tale of death in love, attached to their simple annals. "Come forth, thou fearful man," says the friar in Shakspeare,

* *Parad. XVIII.*

† *Sonnets.*

speaking in the very spirit of those days, "affliction is enamoured of thy parts, and thou art wedded to calamity." But amidst this profound woe, what consolation had they in their faith ! Their love was associated with images of celestial brightness and eternal beatitude. Let us hear Dante, speaking of himself in his *Vita Nuova*. "Some days afterwards, I experienced a painful infirmity. I suffered from it unceasingly during many days, so that I became weak, and like those who cannot move themselves. On the ninth day, during an almost intolerable pain, it occurred to me to think of the lady that I loved. When I had dreamt of her some time, I began to think of my weakened life, and seeing how uncertain was its course, even were I to be in perfect health, I began to lament within myself all such misery. Then after a deep sigh, I said to myself, 'Of necessity the lovely Beatrice must die some time or other ;' and then such a wandering of ideas seized me, that I closed my eyes, and began to labour like one in phrenzy, and to fancy a thousand things. During this delirium, figures of women with dishevelled hair, appeared to me, saying, 'you also will die ;' and then other figures still more horrible presented themselves, and said to me, 'you are dead.' My imagination having begun to wander, I at length no longer knew where I was, and I seemed to behold women walking, with their hair floating down, weeping and lamenting ; and the sun seemed to be obscured, and the stars to become of such a colour that I thought they were in mourning. Amazed and terrified at this vision, I thought that a friend came to me and said, 'do you not know that your admirable lady is departed from this world ?' Then I began to weep bitterly, and not only did I weep in imagination, but I wept with a flood of real tears. I thought that I looked up to heaven, and that I saw a multitude of angels, who were returning up thither, and had before them a cloud very white ; and I thought that the angels sung a glorious hymn, and that I could hear the words of their chaunt, *hosanna* in excelsis, and that I could hear nothing more. Then it seemed as if my heart said to me, 'it is true—our well-beloved lady is dead.' And I thought then that I went to see the body in which this noble and blessed soul had dwelt, and this deceitful imagination, which showed me my lady dead, was so strong, that it seemed as if I saw the women who covered her

head with a white veil, and it seemed to me that her countenance had such an air of humility, that I thought I heard her say, 'I behold the principle of sovereign peace.' In this imagination I called to her, saying, 'dear departed one, come to me, be not cruel, come to me who deserveth you so much, and who already, as you see, weareth your colours.' And when I had seen all the sorrowful offices discharged, which are due to inanimate bodies, I thought that I returned to my chamber, and that from thence I looked up to heaven ; and my illusion was so great that I began to say aloud, 'O beautiful soul ! how blessed is he that seeth thee !'"

The love of the middle ages is now ranked among the follies and eccentricities of an epoch that was immersed in darkness and barbarism. Nevertheless, I shall relate somewhat from its traditions and records, though my discourse should seem like an old tale, which will have matter still to rehearse, though credit be asleep, and not an ear open.

When king Gyron le Courtois, king Melyadus, another knight, and a certain maiden, had come to the spot in the forest where the young knight was slain, they found his body stretched across the road, his hand still grasping his sword, and his helmet on his head. All the road was deep in blood about him. Then the maiden alighted and went gently up to him, and took off his helmet, and his mouth was full of blood. So after gazing on him for a long time with a distracted look, she burst into tears, and said, "Ah, beauteous friend, how dearly hast thou paid for my love ! The good and the joy which thou hast had from me have been only sad and bitter death : beauteous friend, courteous and wise, valiant, heroic, good knight in every guise, since thou hast lost thy youth for me in this manner, in this strait, and in this agony, as it clearly appears, what else remains for me to suffer for thy sake, unless that I should keep you company ? Friend, friend, thy beauty is departed for the love of me ; thy flesh lies here bloody. Friend, friend, we were both nourished together. I knew not what love was when I gave my heart to love thee. Thee only will I love without fail, and besides thee no other, and certainly I know that thou didst love only me. Young friend, thou wert my joy and my consolation ; for to see thee and to speak to thee alone was sufficient to inspire joy. Friend, whilst alive, thou wert mine in will, and it is

clear that thou wert also mine at death. Friend, what I behold slays me; I feel that death is within my heart." Then taking up his sword, she kissed it, and holding it in her hands, turned to Melyadus, and implored him that he would have the knight buried on that spot, and that he would have her body placed by his side in the grave. "How, in God's name," said the king, "what mean you? Do I not behold you in good health, and fair, so as to surpass all the maidens upon earth?" "Sire," she replied, "you do not feel what I feel. My sorrow is greater than you suppose. I know of a certainty that I shall die this day, and will you promise me, in God's name, to grant me this prayer?" The king, all amazed and concerned, replied, "Truly I cannot believe that it should happen as you say; but if it should be so, which God avert, I will have your wish fulfilled." Then turning to Gyron, they talked together concerning the slain knight, while the maiden knelt down over the body, and kissed the sword, which she held firm in her hands, as she gazed upon him. When Gyron perceived that she remained so long without moving, he cried out to the king, "Sire, wouldst thou behold the strangest marvel that thou hast ever seen since thou wert born?" "Yea, that would I; show it to me," replied Melyadus. "In God's name, then, thou shalt see it; approach that maiden, and thou wilt find that she has died of grief." "Impossible!" exclaimed the king. "Nay, but it is so," said Gyron, "or never believe me more." And the king, who could not believe him, came up to the maiden, and certainly of a truth he then saw clearly enough that she was dead, and he signed himself on witnessing this wondrous sight. The other knight also signed himself with the sign of the cross. "Well," said the king, "it is even so. Sooth, one can say with safety that the maid loved truly, and with great love; for she hath died for him." "It is so," said Gyron, "now can there be from this event, a strange tale henceforth told. I will compose a lay, and a new chaunt, which shall be recorded and sung after our death, in many foreign kingdoms. Let us at present provide for their burial; but how shall we discover their names, that we may write them on their tomb?" "We can only learn that," replied Melyadus, "by riding to the castle yonder, which is called le Chastel Ygerve, where they were both born, for they were born both in one castle, and they

were nourished together." So to that castle they rode, and alighting, were received and instructed as to the name of the knight, which was Absdlon, and of the maiden, which was Cessala, and Gyron made a lay, which is still known as "the lay of the two lovers."*

You perceive, reader, how justice is expressly brought forward here as the principle of this devoted affection, which requires the offering of life for life. Now this constancy in love, and the faith which could receive such testimony of it as credible, belong, in a most remarkable degree, to the manners of the middle age, so as to be found even in men whom all things else abandon. "With one solitary exception, all misfortunes that flesh is heir to have been visited on me," says the unhappy Jordano Bruno, in the dedication of a poem to Sir Philip Sidney, who received him into his house when he visited London as a wandering, homeless exile. "I have tasted every kind of calamity but one, that of finding false a woman's love!"

The manners of Spain, till lately at least, were said, among other characteristic features of the middle age, to have retained this fidelity. "As it may be well imagined," says Huber, "women, and through them, love, occupy a very important place in the social life of the Spaniards. Love, and the conversation of women in Spain, imply neither foppish gallantry, and cold calculation, as in France, nor rude sensuality, and defined, faithless formality, as amongst northern nations; but on the contrary, the real emotions of the guileless heart, ever earnest, reciprocal, true, and holy.†"

We have seen the fair side; let us reverse the medal:

"Oh! how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day;
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!"

Reader, from what source descend the greatest evils into the bosom, whence the rib was taken, to fashion that fair cheek, whose taste all the world pays for, even Gentiles in their fabling showed?

Love, exceeding measure, brings neither glory nor virtue to men.‡

Θεῦ, Θεῦ, βροτοῖς ἔρωτες ὡς κακὸν μέγα.§

Why seem these eyes created only to

* Gyron le Courtois, f. CCIX.

† Skizzen aus Spanien. XXVI.

‡ Eurip. Med. 627.

§ Id. 331.

devour an eternal tear? What men are these with minds which appear the echo of all the melancholies that are in nature? Love, abandoned to itself, hath done this. They sought a balm, and they found a poison; they sought their dream, on rising from their couch, and they found the wound in their heart; they sought for rest, and found the tempest; they sought the way of their young years, and they found the way of eternal grief. Alack! alack! that fond nature should disdain counsel, rush headlong to its ruin, and then, forsooth, complain that heaven should practise stratagems upon so soft a subject as itself! Reader, wouldst thou hear a piteous predicament, some moving story of deep love? Open any of the domestic histories of the middle age, visit the abbeys of Cluny, or Cîteaux, and search into the past life of the convertites who mourn there, and then if thou art a poet, thou wilt not depart unsatisfied; only be pitiful; let not the force of vulgar speech move thee to scorn, but bend thine eyes down, as if to view memorials of the buried, drawn upon earth-level tombs. Remember, that if the world for human passions, be all temptation, and yet all severity, the converse marks the Church, which is all prevention; and on the other hand, all forgiveness. Nay, ere you leave her sanctuaries for penitence prepared, there may perhaps be found some aged father, who has had long experience and deep knowledge of the minds of men, who will intimate to you, by tears and looks significant, that those old writers whom your great poet speaks of, uttered truth in saying, "as in the sweetest bud the eating canker dwells, so eating love inhabits in the finest wits of all."

Dante marks the distinction well, when of love he says,

"———While e'er it seeks
The primal blessings, or with measure due
The inferior, no delight, that flows from it
Partakes of ill. But let it warp to evil,
Or with more ardour than behoves, or less
Pursue the good; the thing created then
Works 'gainst its Maker."*

Doubtless, where love was suffered to grow up without restraint or guidance, where it was not sanctified by the principles and hopes of faith, the result could only have resembled that which Ahasverus, in the fable, confesses having experienced.

* Purg. XVII.

"In all my joys," he says, "there is pain at the bottom; and this pain is so bitter, that no sweets of love can remove the taste. I thought that would pass, and it has only increased; I sought to adore her that I loved in all things. If I heard the brook murmur, I used to say, it is her sigh; if I saw the deep abyss, I would say, it is her heart; of the clouds and stars, and of the breath of evening, I made an eternal Rachel. Forgive me if I confess the truth. This fervour, which I recall to mind, is now my despair. All this world has passed; it has withered on my heart."

Dante represents Beatrice as reproaching him for having overlooked the true destiny of love.

"———When from flesh
To spirit I had risen, and increase
Of beauty and of virtue circled me,
I was less dear to him, and valued less.
His steps were turn'd into deceitful ways,
Following false images of good, that make
No promise perfect."*

Yet old history is not without moving narratives which prove that even in such cases there was often something gained, as when men learned to add, with an effectual desire after justice, "O, if I could know what it was to be loved by heaven! O, if I could taste divine love! For it is a force stronger than mine, which impels me to love more than with love, and to lose myself in that sea of Christ which they say is deep enough to receive to rest innumerable souls, and all their remembrances with them." Search the annals of religious orders, search the particular history of each abbey, and there you will find what was the end of that thirst, the source of so many tales of poesy and woe,—the names of Antonius Santaranensis, James of Tudereto, Raymund Lullus, the Abbot de Rancy, are as familiar to the cloister, as they were once to bower and hall.

"I have seen vain love," says a saint of the desert, "made occasion of penance, and the same love transferred to God; love excluded by love, and fire extinguished by fire.†" It was these victims who became the fervent penitents. What do I say? they became the poets who, like Jacoponus, have left to the Church, chants of seraphs and hymns, that breathe heaven. Ah me! they seem to cry each moment, "How sweet is love, itself possest, when but love's shadows are so rich in joy!"

* Purg. XXX. † St. John Climac. Grad. XV.

CHAPTER V.

ANNUNTI AVERUNT opera Dei, thus chanted voices when I prepared to move onwards. Et facta ejus intellexerunt, others added in responsive strain, while I saw a crowd who sat apart with such effulgence crowned, as send forth beauteous things eternal. These had all been separate to the Church; these had all pleased God in their days, and had been found just. They had trusted in the Lord, and had preached his precepts, and had turned men to justice, and had been heard from the holy mountain.

Attend now, reader, and mark intently as thou canst, whilst I endeavour to unfold a grand historic page, and show what was the institution, character, action, and influence of the clergy, in relation to the fulfilment of the divine promise, to those who hungered and thirsted after God.

The ecclesiastical discipline which imposed celibacy on all who ministered at the altar, originated in the motives alleged by the apostle of the nations, the justice, and irresistible weight, of which might be collected out of the mouths even of those adversaries, who in different ages of the Church, have pretended that the reasons which prescribe its abolition, would rather sink the scale. The remark of Anselm de Bagadio, Bishop of Lucca, in the time of Gregory VII. that the deficiency of the clergy of Milan, in preaching and other good works, must arise from their being married (an abuse which under the direction of the Roman Pontiffs, along with St. Ariald, and St. Herlembald, he was appointed to correct, is sufficient to disprove all the arguments of the historian Landulph, who incautiously records it, even had he not so grossly falsified the doctrine of antiquity, in order to prove that marriage had been permitted to his clergy by St. Ambrose.* At the first, this discipline could not have appeared new or paradoxical to the Gentile philosophers, who had con-

sulted the early traditions, or had paid attention to the condition and phenomena of human life. St. Augustin remarks in his book, "De Vera Religione," that Plato chose a life of celibacy merely from philosophic speculations.

The Greek poet speaks of the advantages of men, who are without the marriage state, and says, that "those who are not fathers of children, not knowing whether it be sweet or bitter to possess them, however unhappy in this ignorance, are yet delivered from many labours." But he adds, "I behold those in whose houses there is this sweet fruit, oppressed with cares unceasingly; first with respect to the manner in which they should educate them, and then as to their means of leaving them a provision, while after all, it is uncertain whether they undergo all this labour for those that will prove good or evil."* The old Roman authors gave a definition, fanciful, it is true, of the word expressing an unmarried life, tracing it from that which expressed a celestial life, delivered from the burden of earthly cares.†

Of the objection founded upon political reasons, it is needless to speak: for the arguments of those who adduce it are generally involved in such contradiction, that they refute themselves, as in the work entitled, "New Principles of Political Economy," by Sismondi, one part of which is devoted to attacking ecclesiastical celibacy, and the other to proving the necessity of interdicting marriage to the poor.

After a review of the ancient states, and the changes wrought by Christianity, some have come to the conclusion of Rubichon, that a clergy, under the discipline of celibacy, with its property and its different relations, were the conditions of existence of modern society.‡ He that was sent affirms, it is better to adopt the state which the Church sanctions; those

* Eurip. Medea, 1088.

† Quintil. Lib. II.

‡ Du Mécanisme de la Société en France et en Angleterre, 272.

* Muratori in Landulph. Prolegomena, Rer. Ital. Script. tom. IV.

who speak on their own authority, denied that it was.

The moral difficulties which are said to oppose the discipline of the Church, though they may have a greater show of reality, were not deemed sufficient to justify its abrogation. Louis of Blois meets, in limine, those who think them insurmountable, and speaks as if experience and common sense were sufficient to disprove their assertions. "They say," he observes, "that they cannot live continently; but they do not say the truth; for they received reason and free will from God, and his grace is never wanting to the humble."* It is curious to find the heathen moralist appealing to experience, in order to disprove the proposition which Luther maintained; for speaking of sensual pleasures, Cicero says, "*ab iisque abstinere minime esse difficile, si aut valetudo, aut officium, aut fama postulet.*"† Had other objections which seem of some weight in the modern schools, been brought forward in days of the old learning, their supporters would not have been treated with more respect than were the old men condemned by Cephalus in the republic of Plato, who regretted the pleasures of their past youth, and seemed quite indignant at being deprived of great things, thinking that before they had lived as men ought to live, *οὐδὲ ξῶντες*. It would have been deemed a sufficient answer to reply to such protesters, in the words of Sophocles; *εὐφήμεί, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, ἀσμενίστατα μέντοι αὐτὸ ἀπέρχονον, ὥσπερ λυττῶντα τινα καὶ ἄγριον δεσπότην ἀποφυγόν.*‡

"Certainly, it is not I who will speak against marriage," says a modern French historian, "this state also has its sanctity. Nevertheless, would not the virginal union of the priest and the Church be troubled by a marriage less pure? Would the mystic paternity hold against the natural? Even if he were to accomplish all the works of the priesthood, could he then preserve its spirit? No; there is in the holiest marriage something which softens the iron, and bends the steel; the firmest heart loses something of itself. And this poesy of solitude, those manly pleasures of abstinence, that plentitude of charity, and of life, when the soul embraces God and the world, can all this as easily subsist in the conjugal state? Without doubt, there is a pious emotion on beholding the cradle

of one's child; but where are the solitary meditations, the mysterious dreams, the sublime tempests, in which combatted within us God and man?"* Such thoughts may seem proper food for the peculiar kind of merriment which used to be so extremely offensive to Johnson, though "the sad priest" would have seen in them the testimony of reason, to the wisdom of that choice with which the sacred Scriptures have associated the promise of an inheritance better than sons and daughters,† and to which philosophy may ascribe a multiplied return, even to those who still wear mortal flesh; for as Tieck declares, through the lips of a certain stout and deep-souled Baron, "there are in life a great many sorts of happiness to be consumed."

As early as the fourth century, we find the clergy externally distinguished from the laity by their dress.‡

Pope St. Stephen, in the reign of the emperors Valerian and Gallienus, ordained that priests and deacons should never use their sacred vestments excepting in the Church. During the middle ages, the secular clergy did not exclusively wear black habits. It appears from a bequest in the Testament of Nicolas Flamel, of cloth for the clergy, and also from old banners in churches, and ancient paintings, that priests wore at pleasure cassocks of black or brown, or of bluish cloth.

Clerks bore the tonsure as serfs of God; for only the chiefs of the Franks could let their hair grow long, and the rest were shorn. It was an ancient usage among the Romans to wear short hair. The Barbarians wore long hair. The Jews imitated the Romans. When the Gentiles were admitted into the Church, it was usual to cut the hair of all such as entered among the clergy. Some have supposed, that the tonsure originated with the penitents, from whom the monks adopted it; and that thence it passed to the clergy, who desired to imitate the monastic state.§ The clerical tonsure became of three kinds; there was the tonsure of St. Peter, prevailing in the west, which left a circlet of hair like a crown; the tonsure of St. Paul, leaving no circlet, which prevailed in the east, and with the Greek monks, of which Bede speaks, saying, "that the monk Theodore came into England with the

* Epist. ad Florentium.

† Tuscul. Lib. V. 33.

‡ Lib. I.

* Michelet, Hist. de France, II. 109.

† Isaiah lvi.

‡ Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. I. tit. 1.

§ G. Devoti Instit. Can. I. 1.

tonsure of St. Paul, and that he had to wait till his hair grew, before he could appear with the crown." Finally, the Britons, Picts, and Irish, had another tonsure, wearing only a half circle of hair on the fore part of the head.

Objects which we beheld formerly, in relation to the duties of the blessed meek, present themselves again in this place, as connected with the accomplishment of justice. Formed to war against the huge army of the world's desires, the soldiers of Christ were spread throughout the whole social state in such a manner, that their action might produce the greatest effect, being both diversified to suit the variety of degrees, and united in order to maintain the efficacy of the whole. "As God is a God of order, it is of consequence," says Leibnitz, "that to the body of the one Catholic and apostolic Church, there should be one supreme spiritual Magistrate, with directorial power for accomplishing all things necessary for the safety of the Church."* The Church was a monarchy. "The Papal state," says the celebrated Gerson, "is instituted by Christ, supernaturally and immediately, as having a monarchical and regal primacy in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, according to which one and supreme state, the Church militant, is called one under Christ, which primacy whoever presumes to impugn, or to diminish, or to make equal to any other peculiar ecclesiastical state, if he should do this pertinaciously, is a heretic, a schismatic, a man impious and sacrilegious."† As far as veneration is implied, this is not merely the language of that school in which learned the defenders of the Vatican. Pasquier, who goes so far in defending what were termed "the liberties of the Gallican Church," as to declare that he esteems him as a heretic who thinks that the kings of France are not established by God to command their subjects absolutely,‡ Pasquier, who would transfer to French bishops the power that could only be exercised by him who was perpetually free, and independent,§ who speaks of the most odious acts of Philip-le-Bel, against Boniface, as having been mitigated and reversed, "by a liberality truly French," who would support the pretension of the French kings which affirmed, that if they received any one at their table, he ought

to be received by the priests into the communion of the faithful, that those whom the piety of the prince embraced, should not be rejected by the Church as heathens,* Pasquier, who thinks that as the disputes between the senate and the tribunes, in the old times of Rome, were the means of retaining both in their proper limits, so the disputes between the Gallicans of the university of Paris, and the Romans were beneficial to the Church, the consulship of which was in the city of Rome, while the tribunes were in France,† even this Gallican magistrate professes a profound veneration for the Holy See. "As far as regards myself," he says, "I wish it to be known, that I respect and honour the Holy See of Rome, not to gain any personal advantage, by any act injurious to the honour of my country, but after the old fashion of Gaul, and in the same manner as our ancestors have done. And I have made the above discourse, not from any ill will which I nourish against the Holy See, rather may God visit me with death, but to show that our king bears his safe conduct with his crown."‡

The See of Rome being like a common butt, against which many people let fly their arrows, the heresy of Luther and Calvin, and at present, the race of sophists discarding all religion, inviting them to it as to a feast, it may be well to pause a moment, though we partially examined this point in former books, in order, by a few rapid glances to detect the prodigious solidity and extent of the foundations on which rested the doctrine of its power.

"The Mass," says Luther, "is the rock on which is founded the popedom." Nothing could be more truly or justly said; for even the visible, material organization of the Catholic Church, was in a wondrous manner associated with its doctrines, its living principles, and its faith, as the human soul is connected with the mechanism of the body. When Christ said, tu es Petrus, and what follows, he did not mean to abandon his own right to be head of the Church; nevertheless, in these divine words, he made that apostle its foundation, and gave to him and his successors that primacy, the exercise of which in all ages, as a fact of history, is proved by the very protestations and cautionary measures of distant churches, when its action gave

* Leibnitz, Epist. VIII. tom. 1.

† De Statu. Sum. Pont. Consid. I.

‡ Recherches de la France, Lib. III. 17.

§ Id. III. 36.

* Recherches de la France, Lib. III. 18.

† III. 29, 44.

‡ III. 18.

them displeasure. The contention between St. Peter and St. Paul was not respecting a point of faith, but a question of fact and economy. The dissension between Paul and Barnabas was respecting a companion; for the former did not wish to have Marcus for his associate; as the latter proposed. St. Cyprian did not regard the question of baptism as one of faith; pope St. Stephen had not expressly and explicitly defined it, so that two centuries afterwards, St. Augustin said, that it had not, up to his time, been clearly defined.* How did the religious innovators account for that fact, attested by St. Augustin, that not only they were disposed to disparage the prince of the apostles, as Fuller complains, but the Pagans also had vehemently hated the apostle Peter?† St. Augustin says, that “when the Pagans saw that the Christian religion increased in spite of persecution, they began to think of certain Greek oracular verses which pronounced Christ to be innocent, but affirmed, that Peter, by his magic, contrived to have the name of Christ worshipped for 365 years, after which there would be an end of it. “O the madness of these men!” cries St. Augustin, “to believe that Peter, his disciple, and though he had not learned magical arts from Christ, yet was a magician, and that he preferred having the name of Christ worshipped rather than his own; for which object he was to employ his magic, and to undergo great labours, and finally death! If it was the wicked magician, Peter, who made the world fall in love with Christ, what did innocent Christ do in order to make Peter so love him? Nos ergo qui sumus vocamurque Christiani non in Petrum credimus, sed in quem credidit Petrus. Edified by the sermons of Peter concerning Christ, not poisoned by incantations, nor deceived by magic, but assisted by his benefits, Christ, the master of Peter, in the doctrine which leads to eternal life, is himself our master.”‡ This assuredly is an instance of what is remarked by the present supreme pontiff, that “facts intrinsically connected with doctrines, prove the doctrines themselves.” “The distinctive character of the government of the church,” to use the language of this illustrious pope, “was a perpetual and immutable activity, independent of the activity of the violence

of men.”* The Pope might be resisted by a council when it was not certain he was pope, as in the case of Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., whom the council of Pisa took care to style Pietro di Luna; for the Church was provided with means of securing herself from being governed by an illegitimate pope, and also when by the pope's own authority he was resisted, as in the case of John XXIII., who had promised previously to agree to whatever should be determined, even though it were to be against his own person. In no country, let it be remembered, was the papal authority overthrown, without the loud remonstrances and protestation of those whom men were commanded by God to hear, under pain of being transferred from his right hand to the left. One writer, at least, on the side of the innovators, relates the fact as respecting England, with historical fidelity. “Upon the first expulsion of the pope's authority,” says Weever, “and king Henry's undertaking of the supremacy, the priests, both religious and secular, did openly in their pulpits so far extol the pope's jurisdiction and authority, that they preferred his laws before the king's. Whereupon the king sent his mandatory letters to certain of his nobility, and others in especial office, thinking thereby to restrain their seditious, false doctrines, and exorbitancy.”†

With respect to the temporal power associated with this spiritual primacy, it will be sufficient to hear the opinions of men either formally in the ranks of its adversaries, or in reality its timid and suspicious friends. Amongst the former, Leibnitz justifies the policy of the middle ages in relation to the action of Rome, to such a degree, as to desire that it might revive from its ashes; and of the latter, Stephen Pasquier is a representative, whose testimony is as follows: “Never,” says he, “did any Principality begin from so low an origin, according to the world's thoughts; for it was built on an obstinate poverty, on a continued affliction, on a sworn martyrdom; and never did any Principality arrive at such an extreme degree of greatness; and that, not like other monarchies by arms, but by the renouncement of arms, by keeping aloof from the intrigues of empire, and in spite

* Tract. VI. art. 1 ad 3.

† De Civitate Dei, Lib. XX. 24.

‡ Id. Lib. XVIII. 54.

* D. Capellari il trionfo della santa sede Disc. Prelim. 33.

† A discourse on funeral monuments, p. 80.

of all sorts of obstacles opposed to it from the very first, and of all dangers from mistaken or hostile zeal in later times, for never was there a dignity so much assailed by contradictory opinions, which nevertheless tended equally to undermine it. The dignity of the see of Constantinople, which vainly attempted to claim equality by means of the favour of emperors, and by arrogating lofty titles founded on its local connection with the chief seat of earthly power, enjoyed but a short respite, and great and shameful was the fall and punishment; but that of Rome stood immovable and uninterruptedly triumphant, as if, to use the Gentile imagery, the fortune of the eternal city, weary of being commanded by arms, wished to try what new grandeur it could obtain under men who made profession only of the Word of God and Scripture.* Well might the nations subject to Christian Rome use the words which Torquato Tasso ascribes to them, and say, "O happy yoke! O fortunate subjection, by means of which we are become victorious in studies, in discipline, in empire. Truly, if there be any part of the world not subdued by the Romans, it remains in eternal darkness, not less than the Cimmerian people of whom the poets speak. Whereas, everywhere else men live under the reign of the Christian philosophy and equality of laws, forming one fold under one shepherd. Not many years after Plutarch had passed, the world had taken this form by means of the authority and power of the Roman Pontiffs. Spain, England, Scotland, Ireland, the farthest islands of the ocean, France, Germany, Pannonia, Sarmatia, Illyria, both Misias, Thrace, Macedonia, Epirus, Greece, and the provinces of Asia near the Euphrates, and those of Africa, Arabia, and Egypt, constituted one single republic and one church."† All the names in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, as Pasquier remarks, were more names of charge than of honour. "Est magis oneris quam honoris," says Pope Symmachus of the Pallium, in his Epistle to a German Bishop.‡ "Quid est Episcopatus nisi cruciatus?" says Ives de Chartres, "quid aliud est hic honor nisi onus."§ St. Peter Damian beholds in the short reign of the Roman Pontiffs, which has never equalled the years of Peter, the action of a divine ordinance, to show,

as he tells Pope Alexander, how the glory of temporal life is to be despised upon that supreme seat.

At Rome, the ecclesiastical council, which answered to a senate, was composed of seventy members styled cardinals, a word to express pre-eminence, not from any ambition, or from their being the parish priests of Rome, since they existed before them, but of necessity, to distinguish them as the separate council of that Church.* Landolph speaks of the twenty-four cardinals of the Church of Milan, appointed by St. Ambrose,† for every bishop had a similar council of chosen priests and deacons similarly styled, whom he consulted in the government of his diocese, as we see St. Cyprian giving to his council a deliberative voice; and on the bishop's death, they elected one of their body to succeed him. The dignity of the canons belonged not separately to each, but to the whole college, on which devolved the authority during the vacancy of the see. By ancient privilege, as the cardinals were not bound to reside in Rome, this great consistory and senate spread itself through all the kingdoms of Christendom, so that each cardinal was an assistant to secure the concord of Christian princes, a police, adds Pasquier, which was never known in any other republic.‡

Legates were styled, sent, and born. The archbishops of Canterbury and York, of Rheims and Lyons, of Toledo, Salzburg and Pisa, were legates born. Patriarchs exercised the same power over archbishops, which the latter exercised over bishops. The dignity of metropolitan or archbishop existed before the council of Nice, and is supposed to have come down from the apostles.§ With the metropolitan dignity were invested Titus and Timothy, and their successors, who were appointed over the Churches of Crete and the whole province of Asia. The archbishop had the cross borne before him through the whole province, in token of his jurisdiction. By the council of Lateran, under Innocent the Third, metropolitans were enjoined to hold in their provinces every year a council of suffragan bishops, to reform what might be defective in the manners of the clergy; and for that end fit persons were to be deputed to take cognizance of the lives of ecclesiastics, and to make their report to this council.

* Recherches de la France, Lib. III. c. 4.

† Risposta di Roma a Plutarco.

‡ Germanis Sacra, l. 4.

§ Epist. XVII.

* Joan. devoti Instit. Can. I. 3.

† Mediolanens. Hist. Lib. I. c. 4. ‡ Lib. III. 5.

§ Joan. devoti Instit. Can. I. 3.

All patriarchs and archbishops had the pallium, which was taken from the altar that contains the body of St. Peter, and therefore it was said to be taken from the body of St. Peter. On the day of St. Agnes, in the church of St. Agnes, in Via Nomentana, every year two white lambs are offered at mass, blessed at the *Agnus Dei*, and then delivered to be nourished in some convent of nuns until they are shorn. With their wool the pallium is made, which the Pope alone wears in all places and at all times, others only wearing it within the limits of their jurisdiction and on high festivals, when they celebrate pontifically. The pallium adhered to the person of the archbishop, and was buried with him in the same tomb.*

"The state of episcopal pre-eminence," says Gerson, "has the exercise of its power under the Pope, Peter and his successors, as under one having the plenary fountain of episcopal authority. So that as curates are subject to bishops, by whom the use of their power may be limited or taken away, in like manner doubtless has the Pope authority over prelates."† To a bishop were necessary both ordination and power of jurisdiction, which could be received only from him who had the supreme power over all the churches under Christ, namely, the Roman Pontiff.‡ Not that the bishops were to be simple vicars of the Pope, as governors of a city, acting for the civil monarch. This was not a consequence of the Papal monarchy, but only an imaginary deduction of its adversaries. The Pope could do all things in the government of the Church, so long as he used his power for edification and not for destruction; but bishops were elected for edification, that each might watch over his own flock, while one should have a more eminent power, to prevent schisms and disunion; therefore the supreme Pontiff could never injure the episcopal office, any more than a bishop could oppose the subordination of all to one.§ From ancient times coadjutors were given to bishops. Alexander was given to Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, he being 120 years old; and Augustin was given for a similar reason to Valerius, bishop of Hippo. Bishops used to be carried in chairs when they made their first entry into their cathedral, which was a custom originating in the forms of the old consular dignity.

With the solitary exception of Aërius,

who could form no sect, the distinction of the episcopacy and priesthood was recognised, without contradiction, for more than 1400 years. The constant tradition of all the apostolic churches, attested an unbroken line of succession from the apostles; and those which had been founded in later times, could similarly show the long line of their successive pastors, as in the great hall of the Episcopal Palace of Séz, where we behold the portraits of all the seventy-seven bishops that had filled that see from St. Latuin, in the year 400.*

In the fifth century, when St. Remi baptized Clovis, the church of Rheims already counted a succession of fifteen bishops.† That secondary and accessory power, which the wants of the nations and the reverence of their rulers granted to the episcopal office, may be traced after all to what the apostle suggests—"Audet aliquis vestrum, habens negotium.‡" For, as Estius says, "From this doctrine of the apostle, in the time of Christian princes, it was the custom for Christians to bring their causes before their bishops, as arbiters, that they might be determined and judge by them; and at length, by the imperial constitutions, the bishops had the legal power of judging causes."

From the beginning bishops had adopted external marks of their dignity. The apostles St. John and St. James, and the evangelist St. Mark, wore a border of gold upon their heads. The ring was given to bishops and abbots as an emblem of power, according to the words of the ritual: "*Ut quæ signanda sunt signes, et quæ operienda sunt prodas.*" From the life of St. Cæsarius of Arles, as also from that of St. Germain, it appears that in the sixth century, it was the custom for a clerk to bear the crosier before a bishop when he went to a church. In the fourth century we find that bishops were treated as lords. Anquetil observes that at Rheims, as in other metropolises, the temporal power of the prelate was insensibly established by the deference of the people for the wisdom and virtue of their first bishops; though there it was more rapid in its progress by the especial favour of the kings of France.§ There were no parish priests during the first three centuries, for the bishop then presiding with his senate in the one church to which all repaired, was sufficient for the general

* Lib. I. tit. 3. § 3.

† Gerson. de stat. Eccles. Consider. 3 de stat. prel.

‡ Joan. devoti Instit. Can. Lib. I. tit. 2.

§ Capellari trionfo della santa sede.

* D'Orville Recherches Hist. sur la Ville et le Diocèse de Séz.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, I. 54.

‡ 1 Cor. 6.

§ Hist. de Rheims, tom. I. 10.

wants. Nay, in cities there were no parish priests before the tenth century. The bishop would only send priests to different places according as he thought fit, and for a limited space of time. Subsequently the bishops chose to appoint permanent priests to govern parishes, so that the power of these parish priests emanated from the bishop, to whom they were always to be subject.* By means of synods, the clergy were enabled to act in constant union, to their mutual correction and encouragement. Jaques de Silly, bishop of Séz, in order to give facility to his clergy to attend the synods, built a large house for them in his episcopal city, where he entertained them and their horses at his own expense during the session of these assemblies.

In the language of the first ages, the word parish, was used to signify diocese. Thus in the Apostolical Canons, and in Eusebius, *ἐπισκοπή* means bishopric, for it was not till the sixth century that the lesser divisions were established, which now bear the name of parish, and that the mother church became distinguished by the title of cathedral.

Parish churches used in ancient times to be called monastery, or moutier, from the priests who served in them living in community. Thus St. Augustin formed a community of priests to serve each church. In the sixth century, St. Rigobert assigned goods in common to all the clergy of Rheims, who were bound to live in community under one roof. As Bonald observes, the life in community agreed much better with the religious functions of the ministers of religion, for in transferring the embarrassment of domestic cares to the body at large, it left the individuals more liberty of mind and of body to fulfil their public functions, and it tended to preserve in them the spirit of their order.† In general, a title to some church or monastery was necessary for orders, but not always. Merely on account of learning and piety some were ordained without any specific destination, as in the instance of St. Jerome being ordained by Paulinus, bishop of Antioch.

This gradual and gentle descent from the highest to the lowest degree in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, was designed for the more effectual diffusion through the social order of the sacred deposit of faith, and for facilitating a strict and impartial administration of justice, all members being respon-

sible to a higher tribunal, to which there was an instant appeal when circumstances rendered it desirable.

At Rheims, when the provost of the cathedral did homage to the archbishop, putting the left hand on his breast, he used to hold the right and keep it free, in sign of the engagement which he undertook, to defend the chapter against the enterprizes of the prelate.* But to Rome all final appeals were made.

Pope St. Innocent the First received a deputation from St. Chrysostom, and, after his death, refused to communicate with the Oriental bishops, until they had reversed the sentence against his memory. This was long anterior to the date of the false decretals which schismatic doctors said were the origin of appeals to Rome. "As you know that it is a synodal law," says St. Avitus, writing to Senarius, "that in things relating to the state of the church, if there should be any source of debate, we, as it were, the obedient members, should have recourse to the great priest of the Roman Church as to our head, therefore I have applied to Hormisdas in this affair."† In fact, the influence of that primal seat was in constant action, an intercourse being maintained between it and the most distant churches. In ancient times the bishops of Sicily used to go once in three years to Rome, but St. Gregory the Great extended the interval to five years.‡ In years of jubilee, Ferdinand de Bazan, archbishop of Palermo, used to send to Rome twelve priests and twelve laymen pilgrims.§ Rome was the standard which all aspired to imitate. St. Odo of Cluni says, that he used to hear it said at Rome, in praise of the conversation of the clergy at Tours, that they who deserved to live near the Basilica of the blessed Martin, had no occasion to travel to Rome.||

Such, then, were the divisions and order of the sacred ministry: let us briefly examine into the measures adopted for its support, since what we considered in relation to the detachment and humility of the clergy in the first book, falls under observation here, in regard to the fulfilment of justice.

That tithes are by divine right, if we understand by them the support due to the clergy, but that they are not by divine right, if they be understood as the grant of the

* Hist. de Rheims, Lib. I

† S. Aviti, Epist. XXXVI.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, I. 34.

§ Id. I. 264.

|| De Combust. Basil. Bibliothec. Cluniacens.

* Joan. devoti Instit. Can. Lib. I. tit. 3.

† Législation Primit. II. 266.

tenth part of fruits, was the doctrine of St. Thomas.* Nevertheless, as Alfonso the Wise said, tithes were not paid for the sake of the clergy, but for the sake of God, who will reward the offerers in this world or in the next. Never, during the ages of faith, was the support of the clergy associated in the minds of men with the idea of any thing but the strictest justice. The mercy of the Church even interposed between the people and the state which desired to serve her. "Let there be no forced offerings to the Catholic clergy and to the church," says St. Avitus, archbishop of Vienne. "Nunquam oblata pronuntiem quæ antequam offerentur oblata sunt."† The custom of paying tithes was not received generally in Spain until the sixteenth century, before which time there was no general law to enforce its payment. In France the curates of many parishes had no tithes, but only their nourishment in adjacent abbeys, as simple monks.‡

The history of tithes in Catholic ages, recalls nothing but virtue, generosity, and acts of the purest benevolence; sometimes even it is associated with deeds of heroic devotion, the trophies of which reflect honour upon an entire nation, as in the instance of the letters of King Ranimirus, respecting the vow of the tenths, in consequence of the victory which abolished the infamous tribute of the Christian virgins, which are every year read publicly in the vulgar tongue in the church of Compostella.§

The personal condition of the clergy in the middle ages, was not what is often supposed. King Ferdinand coming one day into the cathedral of Leon, heard the divine office, but saw the ministers of the church through poverty serving at the altar in bare feet, and immediately he left funds to supply them in future and ever after with shoes.|| Churches were often supported by lands which had been given to them in distant provinces. Thus that of Paris, as early as in the sixth century, possessed estates not merely round the city, but also in the diocese of Sens. It had lands also in Provence to furnish oil for the lamps.¶ Theodoc, duke of Bavaria, in the seventh century, founded with his own funds the

bishopric of Saltzbourg; and Robert Guiscard, and the other Norman princes, similarly made provision for episcopal sees in Sicily and Calabria. Orderic Vitalis relates that Giroie de Coursersault, in the eleventh century, having obtained the lands of Helgon, demanded of the inhabitants to what bishop they belonged, and they assured him that they appertained to no bishop. Then he replied, "That is a great injustice: far from me the idea of living without a pastor, and exempt from the yoke of ecclesiastical discipline." Then, having inquired who was the most religious of the neighbouring bishops, he subjected all his lands to the jurisdiction of Roger, bishop of Lisieux, and persuaded Baudri de Banquenœi, Vanquelin du Pont-Echenfrei, and Roger de Merlerault, to subject similarly their estates, which had been equally independent.* The clergy themselves, who often abandoned great possessions of their own, gave riches to the Church. Priests sometimes combined together for the purpose of maintaining the offices. Thus at Blois, the collegiate church of the Holy Saviour was founded within the first court of the castle by twelve secular priests, in the year 1000, who put all their goods in common, and made a fund, after building the church, sufficient to support twenty-eight canons.† The Venerando Consorzio at Parma is a congregation of ninety-four priests, who serve the cathedral voluntarily, without deriving any thing from it. So far were they from being men whose only care it is to have their coffers filled.

The use of annats was most ancient in the Roman Church, and their origin and object were most just, for they were expended in the propagation and defence of the Christian religion; and, at the Council of Trent, no charge could be substantiated against them. Wadding has fully justified Rome against Mathieu Paris, who accuses the collections for the Holy See in England, and has clearly demonstrated the justice of that tribute.‡ It was in general thought that if the clergy had been dependant on casual bounty, and the liberality of the great, their influence could never have been preserved. John the Baptist would not have told Herod so boldly, "non licet," if he had been his pensioner. Daniel would never have ventured to decipher the fatal writing to Balthasar, if he had accepted the

* II. 2. Qu. 87. Art. 1.

† S. Aviti Epist. Victorio Episcopo.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. V. 163.

§ Joan. Vasæi Brugensis Rer. Hispanic. Chronic. VII.

|| Roderici Toletani de reb. Hispaniæ, Lib VI. 14.

¶ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, 1.

* Hist. Normand. Lib. III.

† Bernier Hist. du Blois, 32.

‡ Annal. Minorum, tom. III. 185.

honours and riches which this prince had offered him. Restrained by no consideration, he spoke to him with boldness: "Be thy presents for thyself, O king, and bestow the gifts of thy house on another; but I am to read this writing to you, and to explain to you what it contains."

The origin of ecclesiastical exemptions and privileges must be traced to the love and veneration with which the clergy were regarded both by kings and people during the ages of faith. The praise bestowed upon the Marquis Boniface by Donizo, might have been extended, as we observed in the last book, to innumerable men in those days invested with power, who all, like the father of Mathilda, had their chaplains, who reverently sung before them the nocturnal and daily hours, and on whom they were ever contriving to confer some new favour.

"Pontifices sacros habuit quam maxime caros, Ipsis donabat, quæ censuit his fore grata."*

These privileges and honours are no doubt far from being in harmony with the views of men at the present day; but then it should be remarked, that the language of the moderns respecting the ministers of religion, indicates a total departure from all former traditions of mankind. The epithets "party of the priests," "people that are under the dominion of the priests," and other similar expressions, signify in fact nothing else but the descendants of the race of Seth, the generation of those who fear God. Isocrates commences his celebrated panegyric, by saying that he has often wondered why persons who excel in bodily exercises should be esteemed deserving of great gifts, while those who prepare the souls of men for assisting others, are neglected and left without honour; since the former cannot impart their strength to others, whereas all men can derive advantage from the mind of those who think wisely. Nevertheless, we have only to consult any of the fragments of the early philosophic writings, to be convinced, that during the primitive ages of the world men believed an extraordinary degree of respect to be due to those who sought to make others wise and just. It was the advice of Thales to Pythagoras, that he should apply to the priests of Egypt, for that he would become wiser and diviner than all other men if he passed his life with those priests.†

* Vita Mathild. Lib. I. c. 14.

† Jamblich de Pythagoric. Vit. 2.

From the first age of Christianity, it was the custom to kneel down and kiss the feet of a bishop or priest, to receive his benediction; and it was deemed the greatest happiness to give lodging to a priest or deacon. "Respect forbids me to sit down before a priest," says St. Jerome, in his epistle to Heliodorus. From this custom of kneeling to the bishop, the pagans, indeed, imagined that the Christians adored the nature of a priest as that of a parent.* The primitive discipline, in this respect, was transmitted through the middle ages. Iona, in his laical institutes, shows the duty of honouring all priests, on account of their order, not on account of any accidental attendant on their persons; and he says that the contrary fault can only arise from the negligence of priests, and from pride and ignorance in the laity.† Charles of Blois would always descend from his horse to salute an ecclesiastic. "Devout men," says Durandus, "kiss the anointed hands of a priest."‡ By the canons of the council of Epaone, in the year 517, deacons had been forbidden to sit down in the presence of priests, and the same council desired that noblemen should come at Christmas and at Easter, to receive the benediction of the bishop. The council of Mâcon, in 585, prescribed the marks of honour which seculars ought to show to a clerk on meeting him, and the manner in which the clerk should reply to them. The devotion of the people made such regulations necessary.

Landulph, the old historian of Milan, speaking of the love evinced by the people for the clergy, says, that "there was no laic in the city, who did not, according to his ability, entertain every year, for the love of God, two, four, or twelve, or even more priests, attending to the precept, qui vos receptit me receptit, and that they might have a prophet's reward, receiving them with the utmost humility and charity."§ "In England," as Weever observes, "the priests were in such high and holy repute amongst the lay people, that when any of them were espied abroad, they would flock presently about him, and with all reverence humbly beseech his benisons, either by signing them with the cross, or in holy prayers for them." "And further," saith Bede, "it was the manner, in these primitive times, of the people of England, that when any of the clergy, or any priest, came to a

* Minut. Felix, p. 323.

† De Institut. Laic. Lib. II. cap. 20.

‡ Rationale.

§ Midiolanens. Hist. Lib. II. c. 36.

village, they would all, by and by, at his calling, come together, to hear the word, and willingly hearken to such things as were said, and more willingly follow in works such things as they could hear and understand; a wonderful order of piety both in priest and people." The Saxon chronicle applies generally some eulogistic epithet to bishops. It is either, the benevolent bishop Athelwold, the father of monks, or the wise man; or the innocent abbot Egbert; or Cyneward the good, prelate of manners mild, or bishop Elfgar, the abundant giver of alms, or the blessed bishop Ernulf of Rochester. Similarly, in the old chronicles of Germany, the epithet *dulcissimus presbyter*, is applied to the first Catholic missionaries in the eighth century. The account given of the extraordinary veneration of the Spaniards for the clergy by so late a traveller as Bourgoign,* would lead us to suppose that the manners of that people, in relation to the church, were, down to latter times, similar to those of our ancestors as described by Bede, which in fact were predominant in all parts of Christendom, during the middle ages. When St. Bernard was at Milan, and in other places of Lombardy, by reason of the multitude who came to see him, and to take his benediction, it was necessary for him to shut himself up, and to appear only at a window, and thence to give them his blessing. The empress waited on St. Martin at table, and wherever he trod, or placed his hand, people used to kiss the spot. And what style of manners, think you, had this Martin, who had princes and people at his command? On one occasion, approaching the city of Arverna, when the senators were apprised of his coming, for this city then contained the flower of the Roman nobility, they all went out to meet him, with horses and chariots; but he, riding upon an ass, on which a coarse cloth had been thrown, and coming to the summit of the hill Belenater, which commanded a view of the village Rigomago, saw them advancing with all this pomp, and asked for what purpose they were thus coming, and being told that these were the senators of Arverna, who were coming to meet him, "It is not for me," he replied, "to enter their city with all this pomp," and turning his ass, he was about to ride in another direction, but they followed him, and implored him to enter their city, saying, "We have heard the fame of your sanctity, and we have many sick whom

you should visit;" so he went with them. On this spot where the saint had stood, a chapel was afterwards built, which St. Gregory of Tours mentions.* Not even political animosities could prevail over the universal sentiment which prescribed veneration to the episcopal character. The citizens of Rheims suspecting that the archbishop, John de Craon, was inclined to favour the English, had obliged him to leave his castle, and reside in his palace within the city. The prelate shortly after commanded a procession to draw the mercy of God upon France: in the midst of the ceremony, one of the principal inhabitants, Robert Evrard, came forward to him, in name of the whole city, saying, that they were grieved for having caused him displeasure, that it was not their intention to give him pain, and that they begged his forgiveness. The chief men of the city pressed round Evrard, to confirm what he had said with their respectful looks, while the rest of the people were on their knees. Then the archbishop, with great joy, declared that he pardoned them from his heart.† All this flowed from the general idea of the sacerdotal character predominant during the ages of faith, as expressed in the book of the imitation of Christ, "Great is the mystery, and great the dignity of priests, to whom is given what is not granted to the angels—the power of celebrating and consecrating the body of Christ. The priest clothed with the sacred vestments, was the representative of Christ, who humbly supplicated God for the people; he had before and behind him the signs of our Lord's cross, for a perpetual remembrancer of the passion of Christ; before him he bore the cross, to show that he was to be diligent in following his footsteps, and behind him he bore it to indicate that he was to bear the injuries committed against himself by others for God's sake." The ecclesiastical exemptions may be traced from the earliest times. Artaxerxes commanded that no tax should be imposed upon the least ministers of the temple. Nevertheless, the personal immunities of the clergy were mere gifts from kings. The Gospel does not grant them any privilege. Jesus Christ himself paid the tribute due to Cæsar; and this was a personal obligation, for he had no property. Constantine exempted the clergy from personal tributes, in order that they might apply themselves exclusively to their func-

* Tableau l'Espagne, vol. II. 325.

* Greg. Turen. Miracul. Lib. I. 5.
† Hist. de Rheims, Liv. III. 192.

tions; but in granting them immunities, he made an exception in the case of their private patrimony, and it is curious to remark, that the edict in which this distinction occurs, was issued at the request of the Spanish, African, and Italian bishops. These holy prelates deemed it just that the clergy should support the state with their own property, since they were protected in the enjoyment of it by the laws. Although St. Jerome and St. Augustin thought that the clergy should not retain their own patrimony, because they wished them to be as poor as the apostles, the canon laws both of the eastern and western churches allowed them to keep it. The exemptions granted by Constantine, were revoked by Julian, and restored by Valentinian. These were afterwards multiplied by Charlemagne, who gave great immunities to the clergy, as to their persons and property.* In 1118, at the desire of Thibault, abbot of St. Maur-des-fosses, near Paris, king Louis le Gros published an ordinance which began thus, "Since according to the tenure of the holy laws, the royal power, in virtue of the duty imposed upon it, ought to attend above all things to the defence and honour of the churches, it is fit that those to whom so great power has been delegated by the hand of God, should provide with the most attentive solicitude for the peace and tranquillity of the churches, and that to the praise of Almighty God, by whom kings reign, they should honour the possessions of the church with some privilege, that they may thus acquit themselves of their kingly duty, and so receive indubitably the eternal remuneration; let all men know, therefore, that Thibault, abbot of the monastery of St. Peter, has come into our presence to complain that the serfs of the holy church of his monastery are so despised by secular persons, that in the plaids and civil courts they will not receive their evidence against free men, and that the ecclesiastical serfs are not in any thing preferred to the lay serfs. Having heard the complaint of the church, being moved both by reason and affection, I have found it necessary to deliver this church, so dear to our person, from this scandal." In fact, under the privileges attached to the domains of the church, the rustics, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, acquired such riches and power, many of them possessing fiefs, that they gave alarm to some lay seignories, and

even kings. It was Charlemagne who first exempted the clergy from being citable before the secular judges,* though modern English lawyers pretend that it was the clergy who, about the middle of the twelfth century, renounced all immediate subordination to the civil magistrate, openly pretending to an exemption.† Sir Matthew Hale even says, that Henry II. in the constitutions of Clarendon, "checked the pride and insolence of the pope and the clergy, restraining the exemptions they claimed from secular jurisdiction."‡

The age for such misrepresentations to pass current, is nearly at an end. "One is obliged to confess," says Michelet, "that the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the twelfth century was an anchor of safety. It might spare some guilty persons, but how many innocent did it not save."§

Before the Church had fully changed the ancient customs of the Gentile world, the ecclesiastical privileges of asylum were of the utmost benefit. The Church, and a certain space round it, the bishop's palace, the presbytery house, the canonical buildings, the bell tower, the hospital for travellers, and for the sick, the cemetery, every monastery, and every priest, bearing the eucharist, furnished an asylum from which not even slaves could be torn.|| The clerical exemptions were all in the interest of the poor. Thus the vassals of the bishopric of Evreux, had the privilege of being exempt from certain tolls which were paid throughout all France;¶ and those of the Church of St. Cuthbert had exemptions from military service.

The justice which presided over the promotion of men, to the different degrees in the sacred hierarchy, was a remarkable feature in the character of the middle ages; distinguishing, indeed, at all times, the Catholic discipline, from that which has been opposed to the Church; for it was not merely in the age of Tertullian, that one beheld Heretics receiving all persons, and conferring hasty honours upon them, in order to bind by glory those whom they could not hold by truth; and could see verified what he affirms, that no where are men promoted more easily than in the camps of the rebels; "ubi ipsum esse illic, promereri est."**

* Cap. Carl. m. a. 801. §. 39. f. l. col. 355.

† Notes to Sir M. Hale's Hist. of the Com. Law, p. 164.

‡ Hist. de France II. 393.

§ Joan. devoti Instit. Can. Lib. II. tit. 8.

¶ Hist. d' Evreux II. ** De Præscript. 41.

* Thomassinus de Vet. et Nova Discip. pars III. Lib. I. c. 36.

Observe the injunctions of Ives de Chartres, writing to Hugo, Archbishop of Lyons, respecting a young man not fit for the ecclesiastical state. "Ne in manibus ejus committatur salus aliena qui nunquam adhuc deliberavit de salute sua;" in proof of which accusation, he sends him "One out of many songs, metrically and musically composed by him, which he, and other youths like himself, sing in the streets and squares of cities."*

Mauger, son of Richard II. uncle of William the Conqueror, Archbishop of Rouen, could never obtain the pallium from Rome, being always refused it as unworthy.

"It is not," says William of Poitiers, "that Mauger did not know how to read with a scientific eye the Holy Scriptures; but he did not know how to govern his life, and that of his dependents, after the rules which they impose."†

The conscience of men ill qualified, often interposed to obviate the possibility of their promotion. In the year 1226, the canons of Rheims had given their votes for the election of Hugues de Pierre-Pont, to the archiepiscopal throne. He was suspected of having long desired to obtain the dignity; yet when the moment came, he began to have fear; and he addressed himself to a holy abbot, asking his advice. After having had the modesty to consult the pious recluse, he had the courage to submit to his decision; and Hugues, in consequence, refused the throne, which was offered him.‡ We find John de Avila writing to a young man, who had doubts whether he ought to receive the priesthood; and saying, "I commend your humility, and I love you the more for it." In times past, the most holy men often remained in the rank of deacons, or of the inferior degrees. In those times men had low degrees, and led very high lives.§

On the other hand, no obscurity of birth, or other circumstance of condition, was an obstacle to the elevation of men of merit, to the highest dignity of the Church. By the canons of the council of Orleans in 549, as in many previous, it was decreed, that a serf once ordained, became for ever exempt from all service derogatory to the sacred ministry; but the bishop who ordained the serf of a secular without his consent, was obliged to give two serfs in his place to the former lord. Chateaubriand remarks, "that two thirds of the riches of

the Church were in the hands of the plebeian part of the clergy." Wondrous are the examples of men promoted to the highest places, solely through regard to the interests of the heavenly life. St. Celestin V. was drawn from a hermitage to be raised to the supreme chair. Pope Alexander V. was so poor in his youth, that he begged his bread from door to door. It was a Franciscan friar who first discovered his dispositions, and taught him Latin. On the death of a bishop, a fast of three days was observed, previous to the election of a successor, which was sometimes determined by a vision, or the counsel of a child.* In the year 1248, as the canons of Rouen were preparing to elect an archbishop on the Easter festivals, it was resolved that they should elect the person who should first come into the church to pray to God. At break of day, brother Odo Rigaut, a Franciscan friar of holy life, was going out to preach in the fields, and passing by the parvis of our lady, entered into the church, thinking only to say a short prayer in passing. The canons immediately came up, and embraced him, and confirmed his election.†

Denenulfus, Bishop of Winchester, had been to a late age, not only void of learning, but even a swine herd; when king Alfred, yielding to the violence of the Danes, fled into the woods, and met him by accident tending the swine. Discovering his merit and ability, he directed him to be instructed in letters; and such was his progress, that he finally was raised to the episcopal degree.‡

Oderic Vitalis says, that during the fifty-six years that William governed Normandy and England, the manner of providing for the churches was this: when a pastor died, the prince sent delegates to the widowed see, to take an inventory of all the goods of the Church, lest they might suffer injury. Then the prelates, abbots, and other sage counsellors, being convoked, he took counsel of them to know who was the most proper person to set over the house of God, for things divine and secular. Then whoever had the pre-eminence in virtue and wisdom, was established chief of the see or abbey; and never was there any consideration of fortune, or power, but only of holiness and wisdom.§ He shows at great length the

* Ivonis Carnot. Epist. LXVI.

† Will. of Poitiers' Life of Will. the Conqueror.

‡ Hist. de Rheims, Lib. III. 9.

§ Epist. LXI.

* Mabil. Præfat. in 1. Sæcul. Benedict. §. 9.
† Taillepie, Recueil des Antiquités de Rouen, 192.

‡ Will. Malmesb. de Gest. Pont. Anglor. Lib. II.

§ Hist. Normand. Lib. IV.

cause why the Normans found the English sunk so low, in regard to learning; whereas the Roman pontiffs had formerly subjected them to better institutions. The Anglo-Saxon clergy had before been profoundly imbued with both Greek and Latin erudition; but the long enduring ravages of the Danes in England, had overthrown the seats of learning, and dispersed the stones of the sanctuary. The monasteries being destroyed, the monastic discipline became relaxed; and the canonical discipline did not revive again, until the invasion of the Normans.* In these latter times, when the manners and discipline of the ages of faith, had given way before the influence of the modern governments, it was an archbishop who exclaimed, "May the sanctuary be laid desolate, provided that hearts, those true sanctuaries, may be pure! Rather let us see every thing, than see again every thing that we see."†

From all this it followed, that the bishops of the middle ages were not merely deserv- ing curates to conduct a diocese like a parish, with views corresponding to a small locality; but besides, being men who had been trained in the needful rudiments, they were often great and magnanimous philosophers, to direct the spirit and manners of a whole nation. From the very circumstances of the mode of their election, they could not be the successive disciples of a particular school, to hand down from age to age, the jealous prejudices, and narrow conceptions of a party. The deposit of faith was all that they transmitted to successors; they were often learned monks, who had come from a distant land; devout, innocent, pilgrims, possessing the wisdom of the serpent; men who could sympathize with all that was beautiful, and wise, and holy; greatly, and in a philosophical as well as in a theological sense, Catholic, and who often united in themselves every kind of intellectual interest, and grandeur. St. Sophias, or Cadocus of South Wales, the twenty-fourth bishop of Beneventum, had been a monk, and an abbot. Thrice had he made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and seven times to Rome. At length, on account of his sanctity, this stranger was made bishop of Beneventum, where he obtained the crown of martyrdom, from the hands of the Arians, while celebrating mass in his cathedral. This was during the reign of Arthur, in Great Britain, whose deeds are

recorded in a manuscript, still preserved in the archives of the monastery of St. Sophia.*

National prejudices were never suffered to oppose the promotion of men of merit in the Church, which was a common country for the people of every land. Thus in the eighth century, we find Prudence, a holy and learned Spaniard, Bishop of Troyes, in the fourth century, St. Zeno, an African, Bishop of Verona, in later times, St. Anselm, an Italian, born at Aosta, Archbishop of Canterbury, and many Irishmen, bishops in Italy. In the twelfth century, John of Salisbury, an Englishman, is Bishop of Chartres; the first Bishop of Arras was a Greek; and in a much later age Theodore, another Greek, was Archbishop of Canterbury. Mark the inscription of the tomb of Richard, Archbishop of Messina, in the cathedral of St. Nicholas, in that city, who died in 1196:

"Anglia me genuit, instruxit Gallia, fovit
Trinacris; huic tandem corpus et ossa dedi."†

Roderic Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo in 1208, an historian and philosopher, returning from Rome into Spain, having repaired to Pope Gregory IX. on occasion of a certain controversy, as he descended the Rhone died on board the vessel, and was buried in the monastery of Horta, in Arragon, on whose tomb might be read this ancient inscription:

"Mater Navarra, nutrix Castella,
Schola Parisius, sedes Toletum,
Hortus Mausoleum, requies cælum."

Gervais, Bishop of Séz, in Normandy, was of a noble family, in Lincolnshire; he had composed for himself an inscription, which is on his tomb:

"Anglia me genuit, nutrit Gallia; sanctus
Justus, Thenolium, Præmonstratumque dedere
Abbatibus nomen, sed mitram Sagia; tumbam
Hic locus, ore ut detur spiritus astris."‡

The sixty-sixth bishop of that see, was James Saurez, a Portuguese; Arthur Dillon, from Ireland, was a canon of Rouen in the sixteenth century. Robert, an Englishman, a holy and learned prelate, was the fifteenth bishop of Olmutz, in Moravia.

How anxiously the Church watched, to cut off all the advances of simony in every age, may be seen in the great work of Thomassinus.§ From the year 1049, to 1071, there were five councils especially

* Italia Sacra, tom. VII. 16.

† Sicilia Sacra, tom. II. 400.

‡ Recherches Hist. sur le Diocèse de Séz.

§ De Vet. et Nov. Eccles. Discip. Pars III. Lib. I. cap. 49—71.

* Lib. IV.

† Fenelon pour la Fête d'un Martyr.

directed against simony, and investiture, which were synonymous. Speaking of this crime St. Peter Damian says, "that there are three kinds of gifts; munus a manu, which was money; munus ab obsequiis, which was the obedience of subjection; and munus a lingua, which was the gift of adulation."

Upon the coming in of William the Conqueror, Herebert became bishop of Thetford, by simoniacal agreement. This sin of his earlier life, was afterwards expiated by a life of penitence. Making a pilgrimage to Rome, he deposed his pastoral staff and ring, but deserved to have them again presented to him. On his return he transferred his see to Norwich, where he established a great monastery; he also founded another at Thetford. Thus he effaced the simoniacal crimes of his youth. His tears bore testimony to the sincerity of his words, saying, "*Male quidem intravi, confiteor, sed Dei gratia operante bene egrediar. Erravimus juvenes, emendemus senes.*"*

Memorable, indeed, are the examples of the middle ages, respecting the horror with which the crime of simony was regarded. Who is this mysterious penitent in the desert of Fonte Avellano, that comes forth on Christmas Eve, to assist at the solemnity, after having been secluded in his cell during forty days? One trembles on beholding him. This is he who in six days accomplishes the canonic penance of an hundred years. Hark! to the clash of iron as he prostrates himself on the ground, for he wears a steel cuirass next his skin; two iron rings encompass his body, and two press heavy on his arms and legs; and yet with arms extended, long and fervently he prays, and makes a thousand genuflections, while reciting one Psalter. This is the celebrated Dominicus, surnamed Loricatus, who in the year 1059, put on this terrible vest. What drove him in the desert, was the thought that he had incurred the crime of simony in the year 1025, though it is very doubtful whether he really did partake in it or not. Such, however, is his impression; and, therefore, he deems himself unworthy of ever again celebrating mass; and as the gift of a vestment to a bishop was the cause of his crime, he punishes it in himself by wearing this sharp iron vestment, which he will never lay aside till his death.†

Whenever any abuse crept in, the complaints of the holy men of the middle ages are most affecting. Hear Richard of St. Victor commenting upon the words, "Beneath it dwell the animals and beasts, and in its branches converse the birds of heaven." "Thus," saith he, "the bestial spirits are kept down, but the spiritual are exalted. Let our prelates learn what they ought to do. Let them learn to depress undisciplined manners, and to raise and honour the good. What kind of monster is this, that trees should carry bears, or lions, or other bestial minds of this kind in their branches? While the birds of heaven, and the winged tribe, contrary to the law of their condition, and to the institute of their Creator, are pressed down to the ground? How often have I seen, and have groaned at seeing, the impious exalted and elevated above the cedars of Libanus. Ah! if you truly love these bestial hearts, why so exalt them? Why not spare them? Why prepare their destruction by raising them to the branches whence they must so terribly fall?"* When such sentiments prevailed among the inferior orders of the clergy, and among the people, there was less danger of the higher becoming forgetful of what their duty required. And accordingly Pope Urban II. in writing to the clergy and people of Chartres, with respect to the election which terminated in favour of Ives, who was raised to that see, expressly confides in this principle, desiring them to look to themselves, and adding, "*Si enim placere Deo studueritis pastorem procul dubio Deo placentem habebitis.*"†

Now that it devolves upon me to speak of the justice of the men themselves who composed this vast body, the organization of which we have been considering, I can fully appreciate the difficulty of my enterprise. Would that I could frame some feeling lines that might discover such integrity; but I fear, as Cicero says, "*ne talium personarum, cum amplificare velim, minuan etiam gloriam,*"‡ if it be lawful to use the Roman style in speaking of these modest and humble men, so free from all ambition, from that even of a legitimate glory. What do we find at the summit of this majestic hierarchy? The faith of Peter, the constancy of Cornelius, the felicity of Sylvester, the refinement of

* Will. Malmesbur. de Gestis Pontif. Anglorum, Lib. II. + Annalium Camaldulensium, Lib. XIV.

* Richardi S. Victoris de eruditione hominis interioris Lib. II. 17.

† Ivonis Carnot. Epist. I.

‡ Lucullus.

Damasus, the eloquence of Leo, the learning of Gelasius, the piety of Gregory, the magnanimity of Symmachus, the conciliatory talents of Adrian, the pacific temper of Eugene, the munificence, in regard to learning, of Nicholas, the sanctity of Pius V., the erudition of Benedict, the liberality of Pius VI., the goodness of Pius VII., the heroic justice of Leo XII., the divine light of Gregory, which hath so lately guided back to the Gospel those who were wandering after delusive fires, enticed from the way of the beatitudes by men like these described in the holy song, "Qui dixerunt: linguam nostram magnificabili Dominus est?"* "Never," says Stephen mus, labia nostra a nobis sunt: quis noster Pasquier, "did a history contain more religion and sanctity than that of the bishops of Rome, in the gradual acquisition of their temporal power."† One may believe it truly, since the first thirty-six popes were saints, many of whom planted the church with their blood, and drank their Lord's chalice, all of whom were made the friends of God, their sound having gone forth into all lands, and their words to the ends of the earth; still it is well to hear it acknowledged by a writer distinguished for his political hostility to Rome. It is curious to hear Pontanus express his inability to explain by what arts the Roman pontiffs acquired that temporal power; "For it was not by arms" saith he, "that they vindicated it. They were men wholly devoted to peace and religion, arranging processions and ceremonies; men most innocent, and most removed from all ambition and excess. It is not easy to explain this history. We only behold their equal government, their tranquil administration, their study of peace, and that almost divine majesty of repose with which they are encompassed."‡ Even amidst the evils which desolated Italy during the tenth century, Rome beheld the eighth Stephen, the seventh Leo, and the second Agopitus, pontiffs of admirable holiness, and of blessed memory.§ When Clement VIII. heard himself proclaimed pope, he prostrated himself on the earth, and prayed God to take away his life, if his election would not conduce to the advantage of the Church. He was so humble, that more than once he seated himself in the tribunal of penance, and

received like a simple curate every one who chose to present himself. The chronicle of St. Bertin describes pope Adeodatus as a man of marvellous benignity, who used to dismiss every one that had come to him consoled.* John Picus of Mirandula begins his apology by saying, that he came lately to Rome, to kiss the feet of the chief pontiff, Innocent VIII., and though it was this pope who condemned some of his propositions, he adds, "to whom, on account of the innocence of his life, the name is most justly due."† Never was there wanting, at the moment of need, the force and discernment essential to him who was to rule as Christ's vicar, in order to steer the good vessel of the Church through all the gusts and tides of the world's mutability. And what think you, might be found to illustrate justice in the annals of the pontifical council? "If you will review the state of the Church for the last four hundred years," says Benedict Aretino, writing under Cosmo de Medicis, "I think you will acknowledge that there were not a few cardinals in holiness and learning most eminent; for without mentioning a Bonaventura, you must confess, that Bernard Uberto the Florentine, John Dominicus, Nicholas of Bologna, Francis Zabarello, Julian Caesarino, Angelo Acciajuolo, Adimar the German, Blanda of Placentia, and Antonio Cajetan, were men who discharged that office with the highest praise and veneration, not one of whom, amidst all the state necessarily attending such a rank, was ever accused of vanity or insolence, for what in fact was more remote from them all!"‡ Marcilius Ficinus accordingly reminds cardinal Raphael Riario, that unless he would disgrace his office in the Roman church, his house must be a temple of God, a seat of prudence, justice, and fortitude, a fountain of charity and grace, a choir of the muses, an academy of orators and poets, a school of philosophers and theologians; it must furnish a table to the poor, a refuge to the innocent, an inheritance to the unhappy.§

Truly, for one, I can speak from personal experience, for I was at Rome when the sixteenth Gregory sat in Peter's chair, and if the testimony of an eye witness

* Ps. II.

† Recherches de la France, Lib. III. 4.

‡ Joan. Jovian. Pontani Hist. Neapolit. Lib. I.

§ Mabill. Præfat. in V. Sæcul. Benedict

* Chronic. Monast. S. Bertini, cap. I. pars VI. apud Martene Thesaur. Anecd. tom. III.

† Joan. Picus Mirandula Apologia.

‡ De præstantia virorum sui ævi Dialog.

§ Epist. Lib. V.

may be opposed to the scornful words of him who lately styles himself a believer, let the reader be assured, that his soul would have gathered lively virtue from beholding an assembly of the sacred college, which seemed to me the most august, majestic spectacle, that could be furnished by humanity, in harmony with its Creator's will. Youth which was solitary, or conversant with the poor, amidst its favourite haunts, had escaped from hearing the calumnies of men, and therefore there were no lurking, vile delusions to obscure the vision. I marked in that audience the impress of every noble spirit; I could distinguish the wisdom of a Justiniani, the gentleness and goodness of a Rohan, the dignity and Platonic majesty of a Micara, the unsated thirst of an Odeschalchi, the frankness and manly sincerity of a Zurla, and the unaffected humility of him who once ruled the towers of Lullworth. There was in one whose name is dear to Genoa, the air of a Gregory of Tours, in another the penetration of a Jerome, in another the simplicity of a Fenelon. The spectacle did attract my soul's regard, and enable me to discover new beauties in history, and to feel the grandeur and tenderness of many scenes, the description of which may seem a rhetorical exaggeration, if one has not, from experience, an internal sense responsive to the writer's words. For now I can understand how the presence of Pope Gregory IX., could cause brother Gilles, the devout contemplatist, to fall into one of his usual extasies; now I can understand the majesty of that scene presented in the synod which was held at Rome in the year 1083, when the holy fathers spoke for three days on the weal and woe of the Church, which was so troubled at the time that many bishops were prevented from attending. On the third day, when the holy pope, who was the seventh Gregory, entered, his appearance and discourse were so divine, that almost the whole of that venerable assembly was moved to tears. Of the strength of mind and constancy necessary to meet the present pressure, speaking with a tongue not human but angelic, "the whole audience," says the historian, "broke forth in groans and weeping."* We have a description by Orderic Vitalis of the spectacle furnished at the council of Rheims, and now I can appreciate the justice of his impressions respect-

ing it. After relating that at the end of the cathedral facing the great gate, was placed the apostolic chair, on which sat Calixtus; that before him were the cardinals; that opposite the Rood were placed the chairs of the bishops, and that each metropolitan took his place according to the antiquity of his see,—that you beheld there Raoul of Rheims, Leotheric of Bourges, Humbert of Lyons, Goisfred of Rouen, Turstin of York, Daimbert of Sens, Hildebert of Mans, Baudri of Dole, and eight other archbishops with their suffragans, and the deputies of the absent, as also a great number of abbots, monks, and clerks,—the historian adds that this august assembly gave, by anticipation, an idea of the last judgment, which Isaiah beheld in spirit, and cried, "the Lord will come to judge with the old men, and the princes of the people."*

Bending our view lower, we are presented with the same images of living justice. Read the work of William of Malmesbury, on the lives of the bishops of England in Catholic times, or the similar work of the venerable Bede, and then judge whether that highest justice which consists in following the apostolic steps, after the injunctions of our Lord, was found wanting during the middle ages. The description of the life and manners of a Maphœus Gherardus, patriarch of Venice, by Petrus Delphinus, of Camaldoli,† will show, that in times long subsequent, amidst circumstances so unfavourable as those which characterized the end of the fifteenth century, the same type continued to be realized; so that wherever religion remained unchanged, there was still found the same order of men discharging the episcopal office; not such as would speak, in the assemblies of peers, of their attainment of a mitre, as evidence of their own success in life: their views of such elevation may be collected from that Hydulphus, of whom the chronicle says, on his being made archbishop of Treves, "*Potius est tractus quam electus.*"‡

Thomas Bradwardine, the learned and holy archbishop of Canterbury, so deep a divine, that at Oxford he was called "Doctor Profundus," so great a mathematician, and philosopher, and general scholar, in all the liberal sciences, that he

* Hist. Norman. Lib. XII.

† Annal. Camaldulensis. Lib. LXVIII.

‡ Chronic. Senoniensis, Lib. I. cap. XI. apud Dacher. Spicileg. III.

* Coleti Coll. Conc. t. XI. 676.

was the admiration of his age; though confessor to Edward III., and with him constantly in all his wars, from whom he might have had many preferments, was so far from wishing to succeed by honours, that it was long before he could be persuaded to fill a prebendal stall in Lincoln. In the year 1107, Vulgrin, disciple of Ives of Chartres, fled from Troyes, when he found that Pope Pascal II., there presiding in council, was willing to give him up to the inhabitants of Dole, who sought him, to fill the episcopal see of their city.* Pythagoras, who never admitted any one to his friendship, whom he had not seen to be a despiser of honours, during three years of probation,† would have found no deficiency of subjects duly qualified for his esteem, in this respect, had the different ranks of the Catholic hierarchy been presented. He at least would have been satisfied with such evidence as that to which the cardinal of Winchester appeals in his reply to proud Gloucester; "If I were covetous, perverse, ambitious, as he will have me, how am I so poor? Or how haps it, I seek not to advance or raise myself, but keep my wonted calling?"

The spirit of these ages is expressed in remarkable terms by Parisius, a monk of Camaldoli, in the thirteenth century, whose sentence is found recorded in the necrology of the convent of St. Christina at Bologna. "He who wishes to be chosen," says this holy man, "is not chosen by the Lord; for he saith, I have chosen you. Let no one, therefore, endeavour to obtain his own election. The Lord chose David, whom his father Isai despised or neglected, because my ways are not as thy ways, saith the Lord. Woe then to those who seek to be chosen."‡

Again we must observe, that they bore no resemblance to those Arian bishops, of whom St. Jerome says, "From the bosom of Plato, or of Aristophanes, they are raised to the episcopacy, not differing from Gentiles, so that a Church which receives bishops from the heretics, does not so much receive bishops as priests, from the capitol."§ The Irish synod, in the eighth century, whose decrees were published by Dacherius, says, "He who is to be ordained a bishop, must previously be examined in order to ascertain whether he is prudent by nature, docile, temperate in his man-

ners, sober, chaste, affable to the humble, merciful, learned, instructed in the law of the Lord, cautious in the interpretation of the Scriptures,"* without once alluding to the accomplishments which the world would require for those whom it invested with pre-eminence.

At the council of Rheims, where Pope Calixtus II. presided; on the first day, being Sunday, after the Pope had preached on the Gospel, the cardinal, bishop of Palestrine, made a discourse on the obligations of the Episcopal office, and proposed as an example, Jacob guarding the flocks of Laban; who said, "I was pierced with heat during the day, and with cold during the night; and sleep fled from my eyes; thy sheep and thy goats have not been sterile; I have not eaten the rams of thy flock."

The verses which the ancient historian of Ely addresses to the blessed Adelwold, express the episcopal character, as it appears in the history of the middle ages.

"O decus Ecclesiæ, vas nobile philosophiæ !
Cujus ad exemplum Christi fies homo templum,
Vir pie, sancte; bone pater, Adelwolde Patrone
Inter opes seculi sitibas gaudia celi."†

Anquetil, in his history of Rheims, speaking of the archbishops of that see, boasts of having recalled to the memory of men, the merit too little known of Vulfar, the capacity of Foulques, the justice of Hervé, the piety of Courtenai, the sweetness and affability of Ursins, the liberality of Briçonnet, the ability of Gervais, of Guy Paré, of Alberic de Humbert, and the truly episcopal qualities of Guillaume de Trie, of Robert de Lenoncourt, and of Guillaume Giffort.‡ He says, that many were models of holiness, of wisdom, and goodness, in difficult times.

In early ages, St. Remi, and St. Rigobert, the one insensible to the delights of a court which sought to please him, the other superior to the persecutions of an angry conqueror, showed in arduous circumstances, how the ministers of Jesus Christ ought to act in prosperity and misfortune. St. Camelien, bishop of Troyes, successor of St. Loup, in the year 507, assisted at the council of Lyons, where Sidonius saw him, who thus describes him in his epistles.§ "Of a truth, he is such a holy man, that he seems to have brought to

* Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 272.

† Jamblich de Pythagorio. Vita, cap. 17.

‡ Annal. Camaldul. Lib. XXXIV.

§ S. Hieron. advers. Luciferianos.

* Capitula selecta Hibernens. cap. 7. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. IX.

† Hist. Eliensis, Lib. I. c. 6. apud Gale Hist. Brit. tom. III.

‡ L. XXII.

§ Lib. VII. 13.

life again, in his own manners and conversation, the Bishop of St. Loup, his master, so deservedly esteemed the first of all the prelates of Gaul, then living. O what gravity and sweetness were united in this holy man! He loves learning; but above all, that learning which has regard to piety and the Catholic religion. In all his actions and intentions, it is Jesus Christ that we behold and hear. He loves to oblige rather than to be repaid with gratitude; so humble is he that in all places, and to all men, he wishes to yield place; and his admonitions are given with such grace and delicacy, that no one is offended or wounded; and all are equally satisfied with his counsels."

In order to ascertain how far the true episcopal type corresponded with their characters, the bishops of past times used to interrogate themselves after the manner of St. Augustin on the anniversary of his consecration, inquiring whether disturbed by various cares and difficulties, they had not heard any one, as he desired, or beheld any one with a displeased countenance, or uttered a severer word, or had afflicted any one in trouble or poverty, by an inconsiderate reply, or had neglected relieving any one in want, or discouraged him by their brow, or had been angry against any one through false suspicion.* Mark now the details given by ancient authors, respecting St. Edmund of Canterbury; for his later biographers pass over many things which though minute, are not less remarkable. It was his custom every day and night, to meditate upon the passion of Christ. While treasurer of the Church of Salisbury, he was so bountiful to the poor, that for a part of the year, he used to repair to a monastery of Stanley, from wanting means to live. The abbot, Stephen de Laxiton, a venerable man, used to advise him to be more prudent; but he replied, "I wish to show that theologians are not the avaricious men that calumnious persons report them to be; and I wish to entertain courtiers and secular men that I may gain them to God." He was never angry during his whole life but once; and that was on his journey from Paris to England, when his companion, through negligence, lost the Bible with which he had entrusted him; and then he quickly recovered his tranquillity. He had always an ivory image of the Blessed Virgin before his face, upon the desk which sup-

ported his book at study, with these words inscribed, "A child is born unto us." When the monks of Canterbury came to Salisbury to signify to him his election, he refused for three days, and at last complied, when told by the bishop of Salisbury that he would sin mortally if he did not suffer himself to be elected. When primate of England, he rather feared the burden than felt pride from the dignity; on a journey he would hear the confession of the poorest man that applied to him; he used to pass whole nights in prayer and meditation without sleep. He always honoured and worshipped the female sex, on account of the Blessed Virgin, and its devotion; he used to give portions to poor young women, to enable them to be married well. The law and custom of the land adjudged to him the manor of a certain knight which was to be redeemed afterwards for a sum of eighty pounds sterling, which sum as soon as he received, he gave to be divided among the four daughters of the knight, that there might be no delay to their marriage. There was another custom of the land which ordained, that when the father of a family died, his lord was to receive the best animal that he possessed, of whatever kind it might be, in token of his being the lord. A certain widow came to him, entreating that he would restore her draught horse; to whom he replied, "Good woman, this is the law of the land, and the custom requires that your deceased husband's lord should have his best animal." Then turning to others, he said in Latin, "*Veraciter hæc institutio legis est diabolicæ, non divinæ.*" "After the captive has lost her husband, the best thing that her dying husband has left her, must be taken from her; this is not a good custom." Then turning to the woman, he said to her in English, "Woman, if I should lend your animal to you, will you take good care of it?" "Yes, my lord, as much care as if it were my own." Then he ordered his bailiff to restore it without delay. He saw the blessed Thomas of Canterbury in a vision, and tried to kiss his feet. Being obliged to fly from England, for maintaining the rights of the Church, he took refuge in the abbey of Pontigny, the general asylum for English exiles, on account of the sanctity of its superiors. And he was glad to be banished to the same country which had received St. Thomas of Canterbury, and Stephen Langton, his predecessors. Here he fell sick, and when he could no longer repair

* Serm. de propr. Natali.

to the gate of the monastery, to give alms to the poor, he gave money to his chaplain, and charged him to discharge this office with all charity, and prudent discernment. Having received the adorable eucharist, he caused the cross, with the images of the Blessed Mary and St. John, to be placed before his eyes, which receiving, he kissed it, shedding many tears. Then causing wine and water to be brought to him, he washed the wounds of the nails and of the lance, and then signing it with the cross, he drank that ablution, saying, "*Haurietis aquas in gaudio de fontibus salvatoris.*" All present admired the expression of his face, which reflected the joy of his mind. To the physician who felt his pulse, saying, "It was very weak," he replied, "That he was ready for his journey, being fortified after the manner of Catholics." Then he ordered the tapers, and all things requisite for his obsequies, to be prepared; he breathed no sigh, and evinced no symptom of death; but sat or lay clothed on his bed, with his head reclining on his hand. At length, at sunrise, on the Friday, the day on which Christ tasted death for the dead, he slept the sleep of peace, without any previous struggle, and passed from the miseries of men to the joy of angels. His body was buried in solemn state in the monastery of Pontigny, in Champagne, which is on the road about half way between Rome and St. James, a house which no one devout to God ever passes near without visiting, and, therefore, the fame of his sanctity was spread through all lands.*

During the middle ages, innumerable prelates imparted to different cities and dioceses, that charm which the memory of Fenelon has been able in latter times, to associate with the name of France, which though desolate and stript of most memorials, is still embalmed with the fragrance of his virtues. Such in the thirteenth century was Eberhard II. archbishop of Salzburg, called by the people, the father of the poor, the lover of peace.† The terms with which Alcuin begins his letter to Arno, archbishop of Salzburg, indicate how faithfully he discharged the duties of his office. "*Aquilæ per Alpes volanti, per campos currenti, per urbes ambulanti, humilis terrigena salutem.*"‡

"Blessed be God," cries Ives de Char-

tres, writing to Thomas, archbishop of York, "who hath made your conversation to shine forth in the darkness of a barbarous nation."*

When Petrarch was at Prague, he formed a union with two prelates of distinguished merit, Ernest de Pardowitz, archbishop of that see, and John Ocsko, bishop of Olmutz. Ernest used to say to him sometimes, "Friend, I am concerned to see you among barbarians." "Nothing, however," says Petrarch, "was less barbarous than these prelates. They were as gentle, polite, and affable, as if they had been born at Athens." Hear how he speaks of the Bishop of Lember, on reading his letter to the Cardinal of Colonna. "Every line of it breathes modesty, the love of moderation, freedom from ambition, and contentment with his lot. In it are the principles of the soundest philosophy, expressed in the most noble and exact manner." What a love of justice, and what solid virtue shone forth in that illustrious Ives, bishop of Chartres, whose Epistles and Decretals throw such light upon the contemporaneous history. Ives was not a courtly prelate. "If I did not thank you sooner," says he, to Samson, bishop of Worcester, who had sent him a present, "it was because I am a slow man, of few words, and of not sufficient urbanity; but I am not slow to repay your kindness with deeds."†

This picture is unlike the preceding, but the saintly character admitted of infinite variety in the reception and employment of graces; and so clearly was this seen in history, that it may be supposed the church alludes to it when she sings "Behold a great priest, who in his days pleased God. There was not found the like to him, who kept the law of the Most High." It may be remarked, that frequently writers, the most hostile to the Catholic hierarchy, have been compelled to speak in admiration of its justice. "The order of bishops in this kingdom," says Swinburn, "leads a very exemplary life, much retired from the world, expending their great revenues in feeding the poor, building and endowing churches, convents, and hospitals, and allowing very scantily for their own expenses."‡ Bourgoign gives a similar description of the manner in which the prelates of Spain employed their power and wealth, when speaking of the Cardi-

* Vita ejus apud Martene Thesaurus Anecd. tom. III.

† Germania Sacra, tom. II. 343.

‡ Id. tom. II. 118.

* Ivonis Carnot. Epist. CCXV.

† Epist. CCVII.

‡ Travels through Spain, 1775, vol. I. p. 125.

nal Lozensana, archbishop of Toledo.* On the road from Madrid to Saragossa, he finds a village built by the Bishop of Signenza, on which occasion he observes, that "everywhere in Spain, the bishops are at the head of the benefactors of their respective cantons."†

Don Lewis de Armundarez, of a noble family in Navarre, abbot, bishop, and finally archbishop of Taragona, after all his promotions, died so poor, that his sepulchre in the monastery of Val-Parayso, could only be erected with the alms of the faithful. So bountiful was he to the poor, that, as St. Bernard says, "inter aurum sine auro pertransiit."‡

Bishops frequently employed the wealth of the Church in works of secular utility. Fortunatus, himself a bishop, celebrates in verse the praise of Felix, a bishop, who cut down mountains, filled up valleys, banked out rivers, and drained extensive regions,§ and Cassiodorus exhorts Æmilian, a bishop, to put the finishing hand to a vast aqueduct which he had begun, that, like another Moses, he might give water to the fainting people.||

It was Bishop Crispus, in the reign of Severus, who built the first stone bridge over the Tessin at Pavia, and raised the river's banks to preserve the lands from inundation.¶ The writers of the middle age, say that the bishop was the eye of all the land. Olaus Magnus relates that John Magnus, archbishop of Upsal, his brother and predecessor, when visiting his diocese, having purchased at his own expense instruments, gave them to the people, and taught them, by persons who were skilled in the art, the mode of procuring salt, by which he conferred a benefit upon the inhabitants of the north for ever.** The names of Catholic bishops are still associated on the tongues of the people with various great works relating to the drainage of the fens in the eastern counties of England. It was Humbert, archbishop of Lyons, who constructed the stone bridge lined with houses over the Saone in that city, being himself the architect and chief contributor.††

When the Sarrassins had destroyed the

city of Frejus, in Provence, in the tenth century, it was Riculphe, the bishop of that see, whom thirty years after, heaven raised up to rebuild it, which he did at his own expense, in the gothic durable style, as we find it at the present day.* What holy men were those powerful lords, the bishops of Nantes, jealous of the rights of their see, but also jealous of the public liberty. Nantes still venerates the memory of St. Felix, one of her earliest bishops, who dug the canal which yet bears his name, and made a fine navigable river of the Erdre, which was then stagnant, spreading into a pestilential marsh. Guillaume de Champagne, archbishop of Rheims in 1179, re-established the popular office of sheriff in that city. His charter began as follows: "As the princes of the earth, in preserving the rights and liberties of their subjects, acquire the love of God and of their people, and similarly by violating and changing ancient customs, expose themselves to incur the anger of God and to lose the confidence of their subjects, therefore, dear children and faithful citizens, we restore you to possession of the privileges which were granted to you in ancient times, and which the changes introduced by some of your lords have not been able utterly to abolish." In like manner, the Archbishop Renaud de Chartres conferred the most eminent favours on the people of Rheims.† Speaking of the bishop of Beauvais, Ives de Chartres says, "whose simplicity has this laudable character, that it can neither please those who are perversely, nor displease those who are rightly wise.‡ The *φρονῶν ἐπίσκοπον* had the wisdom of the serpent and the gentleness of the dove. In fact, the manners of these men of power and magnificence were characterized by the utmost meekness. Ives de Chartres always styles himself "the humble minister of the church of Chartres." On one occasion, when St. Frances de Sales came to Lyons, the two courts of France and Savoy being in that city, and persons of the highest dignity being ambitious of entertaining him, the holy bishop would accept of no other lodging but the gardener's room of the Convent of the Visitation. St. Ambrose, as we learn from St. Augustin's Confessions, used to receive every one who came to see him, and admit them without any announcement into his private chamber. Bishop

* Tableau de l'Espagne, vol. III. 4.

† Id. III. 31.

‡ Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cisterciens. Lib. VI. 8.

§ Poem, III. || Leg. IV. Ep. 31.

¶ Bernard. Sacci Hist. Ticinensis, Lib. VI. c. 9.

** Olai Magni Gentium septent. Hist. Lib. XIII. c. 6.

†† Paradin. Hist. de Lyon, Lib. II. 33.

* Hist. de Frejus, Lib. II.

† Hist. de Rheims, Lib. II. 222.

‡ Ivoius Carnot. Decret. Epist. III.

Theodotus used to give the litter to his clerk, and mount himself upon horseback ;* and we had occasion to remark before that in the fourth century, St. Martin, bishop of Tours, made the visitation of his diocese mounted on an ass. It is recorded of the apostle of Ireland that, until his fifty-fifth year, when he was advanced to the episcopal degree, he used always to travel on foot, but that afterwards he used a chariot, after the manner of the country, and that over his other garments he wore a white cowl.

Many persons at present would be not a little amazed, I suspect, if they could be shown what sort of personage was a Catholic archbishop of Canterbury. Here then is one, who flourished in the thirteenth century, when that see was invested with all the power and pomp that kings and people could confer upon it. The name of this ecclesiastical potentate is John Peccham. As a Franciscan friar he had travelled over many parts of Europe on foot. He went from England to Padua, to the general assembly of his order, and returned, without having once used a horse or carriage of any description. It was contrary to the wish of his heart, and only out of holy obedience, when the mitre was placed on his head ; and so little have his manners been affected by his new dignity, that you can often see him still discharging the lowest offices with simplicity, and even employed in lighting the wax-tapers of his own church. You are pleased, perhaps, with his humility, but you will add, that learning and high intellectual qualities are still more essential in such a station. Well, reader, you find them also in this archbishop, who is the most learned man of his age. When at Rome, teaching theology in the sacred palace, such was the opinion of his wisdom, that men of the highest order came to hear him ; and when he used to pass through the school, bishops and cardinals used to rise up and uncover, and stand bare-headed before him ; though when he continued to teach after his election to the see of Canterbury, no one of the cardinals then used to move, because formerly they said, they showed that honour to his virtue, in which they felt themselves his inferiors, but then it would seem as if they paid it to his dignity, in which they were superior. But neither learning, nor humility, you continue, can compensate for the neglect

of the poor, and an indifference to the interests of the people. Little do you know these men, if you imagine that such charges apply to them. This great theologian and philosopher is a lover of the poor, and often their companion ; he clothes them, feeds them, waits upon them, and washes their feet. He rises hungry and thirsty from the episcopal board, at which others have had a joyful feast. His palaces are open to the stranger and the destitute, but he loves only the house of God, and the place where his glory dwelleth. In the age of feudal severity he writes against Earl Warren, in behalf of the poor people, whose corn is trampled on by the deer and stags from his woods, without their daring to preserve it. Of all abuses he is the zealous reformer. Severity of government, immoderate exactions, multiplicity of forensic altercations, neglect of preaching in the episcopal order, and immorality of manners, he denounces and opposes with prudence and efficacy.* How few of the moderns are aware that this was the general type of the episcopal character in the middle ages, when the bishop's throne was established in justice and his seat in equity.

The heroic spirit of the middle ages, which induced so often the chief to choose the part of an inferior, when it furnished an opportunity for showing greater devotion, appears in the conduct of the men who governed the church. " Passing by Carcassonne," says a pilgrim clerk, " having demanded an audience of the bishop, I was told that he was gone to a village at a distance, to visit and console the inhabitants, who were attacked by the plague." But it would be endless to multiply these details. In conclusion, as we always close our survey by a visit to the tombs, among which it is so often sweet to stray, we can read a few of the ancient epitaphs which describe the pontiffs of the middle age. On the sepulchre of St. Andreas, bishop of Fundana, which is in the church of Cajetana, we find these lines :

" Pande tuas, paradise, fores, sedemque beatam :
Andræ meritum suscipe Pontificis.
Custos justitiæ, doctrinæ, et pacis amator.
Quem vocat ad summum vita beata bonum.
Plenus amore Dei nescivit vivere mundo,
At famulo Christi gloria Christus erat.
Quem meditata fides et credita semper inhaesit,
Hæc te usque ad cælos et super astra tulit.
Nunquam de manibus sibi lex divina recessit :
Elogium Domini vixit in ore suo."†

* Wadding. *Annal. Minorum*, V.
† Italia Sacra, tom. I. 721.

* Sophron. *Prat. Spirit.* 33.

Read next the epitaph of Ugolinus Malabranca Urbevitanus, an Augustinian, and bishop of Rimini, who died in 1374, a man of profound erudition.

"Carior est veterum virtus, doctrinaque, mores:
(Heu, ubi prisca fides! lugemere illa solet.)
Virtuti rectæ veteri Urbevitanus adhæsit,
Urbevitus, studiis, indole, more, vetus."*

Pyrrhus Aloysius Castellomata fell a victim to the disease which swept away the people of his diocese in 1656, and on his tomb in his cathedral we read,

"Majus amoris opus nullum est, quam ponere vitam
Pro grege, pro patria, religione, fide."†

Adelard, bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths, before the year 1000, was buried in the cathedral which he had built there, on which was this inscription:

"Vitæ præsentis bona qui labentia sentis,
Ad cæli sedem currito, coge pedem.
Ore sonet fundavi tamen hoc, et sic decoravi,
Curavique Deo posse placere meo."‡

A bishop of Saltzburg is thus described by Alcuin, who composed the inscription on his tomb:

"Judicium promat justum tua lingua, sacerdos,
Ut Christo placeat quicquid in ore sonat.
Ore sonet Christi laudes, et vera loquatur,
Et totum redolet pectus amore Dei."§

But without wandering so far, let us only enter the cathedrals of Winchester and Canterbury, and behold the silent and half-ruined sepulchres of the pontiffs and abbots of the middle ages, and then, indeed, he must be a good orator who shall be able, by any fluent discourse, to counteract the impression of these mute stones, and convince us that these were not the men whom the Lord crowned at the gates of Paradise and invested with a stole of imperishable glory.

Such, then, was the type of the episcopal character so often reduced to practice by great and humble Christians during the ages of faith. What has antiquity to produce comparable to such characters? I do not ask what have the modern disciplines, because their fairest images partake of justice only in proportion to the affinity

between them and the Catholic standard, as their own historian would lead us to conclude. "The bishops," saith Burnet, "generally grew haughty and neglected their functions: some few that were stricter and more learned, did lean grossly to popery."

Abuse and scandal must of necessity come, though infinite justice has declared that inexcusable are those through whom they come. Men talk of unmasking priests, as if any persons had been more loud in censure of all vices in priests than priests themselves, or than those whom priests have canonized, as may be witnessed in the third book of St. Catherine of Sienna. The clergy by all kinds of monuments chose to perpetuate the memory of sins within their own order, that future pastors might be warned never to forsake justice. What mean these four images of canons standing against two pillars outside the chancel of the cathedral of Evreux, on the side of the cemetery, three of which are hooded in the usual manner, while the fourth stands apart, bare headed, and holding his hand on his breast, in sign of penitence? Tradition informs us that this man having fallen into heresy, had been interdicted by the chapter, but having abjured his error, and being re-established in all his honours, it was still required by the chapter that these statues should remain, when the church was rebuilt by Henry the first, king of England, and Ouen, bishop of Evreux.* Hear how St. Augustin speaks in his epistle to Felicia: "I conjure you, then, be not troubled to excess by these scandals of which you are a witness, which have been expressly predicted by our Lord, in order that when they arrived, we should remember that they had been foretold, and that our confidence should not be shaken. Offences must come. What are men but beings who seek their own convenience, and not what belongs to Jesus Christ? Among those who occupy the pastoral chairs, if there are some who seek only the interests of their flocks, there are also others who desire only temporal honours and the advantages of time. It must needs be that till the consummation of ages, these two classes of pastors should be perpetuated even in the bosom of the Catholic church. In fact, if in the apostle's time there were Christians who deserved the title of false brethren, and whose fatal blindness the

* Italia Sacra, tom. I. 428.

† Id. tom. VIII. 238.

‡ Id. VIII. 347.

§ Mabillon, Vet. Analect.

* Hist. d'Evreux, 11.

apostle had to deplore, if he supported them nevertheless with patience, instead of cutting them off with severity, how much more probable is it that there should be similar men in these days, since our Lord said, in allusion to the latter times, that iniquity would abound, and that the charity of the greatest number would wax cold? but what follows should console us, since he adds, 'but he that shall persevere unto the end shall be saved.' There are good and wicked men among the pastors, as there are good and wicked men among their flocks. Now hear what the Scripture saith of these wicked pastors: 'They are seated on the chair of Moses. Do what they say, but take heed how you imitate their works, for they say and do not.' In conformity with this advice, the sheep of Jesus Christ hear his voice even by the mouth of evil pastors, and do not abandon unity, because the good which they hear them utter is not of their own but of God. Behold, then, how these same sheep may still feed in safety, because even under bad pastors, they can nourish themselves with the pastures of Jesus Christ. St. Paul, though he invites the faithful to become his imitators, yet severely blames those who wish to avail themselves of the name of apostles, in order to introduce divisions into the church, and who say, I am a disciple of Paul. Is it Paul, then, who has been crucified for you? Is it in the name of Paul that you have been baptized? From this we learn that good pastors are those who do not seek themselves but Jesus Christ; and also that the good sheep, while they apply themselves to imitate the virtues of their pastors, do not place their hopes in these same pastors, whose ministry is confined to the task of reuniting them all in one flock, but in Jesus Christ, by whose blood they have been redeemed. So that if, by chance, they meet with bad pastors, who preach the doctrines of Christ, and who do their own works, they then practise what they say, and do not what they do, and they do not forsake the pastures of truth because of these children of corruption. For be it repeated once more, in the Catholic Church, which is not confined to a corner of Africa like that of the Donatists, but which is spread throughout the universe, and which increases and bears fruit according to the promise of our Divine Master, there are good and bad. As for those who are separated, as long as they are in opposition to her, they cannot be good. In

vain will the works of some appear to bear testimony to their virtue: they are bad at least on account of their separation, since the Lord has said, he who is not with me is against me."

The motive of kings and princes in conferring dukedoms and baronies upon bishops, was partly in order to enhance their dignity in the eyes of the barbarians who were but newly, and often at first but partially converted to the faith. Thus we read of Canute, "observing how little veneration a rude people would have for bishops, lest the possession of such a title should be left among private men, he imparted to them, by decree, a share in the civil judicial power, and made them dukes and nobles."*

By the ancient emperors of Germany it was a prescription that, on all solemn feasts of Mayence, the archbishop of that see should be seated on the emperor's right hand, and the abbot of Fulda on his left.† It is true that such honour could intrinsically confer but little upon those to whom the Lord made a covenant of peace, who by Him were made princes, that the dignity of priesthood should be to them for ever. Nevertheless this policy was well intended, and, under general circumstances, calculated to produce excellent fruits of justice. Incidentally, however, it led to great abuse. It was well that the highest nobles should come forward to honour the entry of the chief pastor of their diocese; but when in compensation for such homage, they could, like the proprietors of the lands and dependencies of De Thuisy, seneschals of Rheims, claim a right to reside in the episcopal palace during the residence of the bishop, and keep with them three horses, three dogs, and three hawks, and all at the expense of the archbishop, the evil bore no proportion to the advantage arising from a nobleman holding a bridle during a procession, or serving the first dish at a banquet. But this was not all; for to the possession of feudal domains must be traced those warlike measures which certain bishops felt themselves under the necessity of adopting, in conformity with what was required by the feudal law. The pious abbot Ermoldo Nigello, forced to take arms in spite of his habit, boasts, indeed, of not having wounded any one, and carried a proof of it upon his shield.

* Baron. An. 1081, n. 37.

† Chron. Slavor. Lib. III. cap. 9.

"Hoc egomet scutum humeris enseque revinctum
Gessi, sed nemo me feriente dolet.
Peppin hæc aspiciens risit, miratus—"*

Gozlin, bishop of Paris, during the siege by the Normans, in the year 885, from his rank and birth, had the greatest authority in the city. Five years before Louis the Third had confided to him the care of the kingdom. He is styled by Abbon, the monk of St. Germain, in his poem on the Siege of Paris, "*Præsul Domini et dulcissimus heros.*"† Yet his warlike office seems to have been chiefly exercised in raising fortifications, sending for assistance, conducting treaties, and organizing the material means for defending his country. In other respects, he is said, by Abbon, to have nourished his flock as a benign pastor.‡

The moderns, however, have not the merit of having been the first to discover that such intermixture of contradictory characters was scandalous and abusive. "O new and detestable perversity, to prefer warfare to the clerical office, the forum to the church, human to divine things, earthly to heavenly!" This is what St. Bernard exclaims, on hearing that Stephen Garlande, archdeacon of Paris, had the office of seneschal in the court of Louis the Sixth, king of France. The assumption of arms by the clergy, was always considered irregular and inconsistent. William of Jumiege, speaks of a certain Raoul, surnamed the Clerk, on account of his study of letters, and also called "*male-couronne,*" because, applying also to chivalrous exercises, he did not well maintain the clerical gravity.§

The Irish synod, in the eighth century, decreed that if any priest should be slain in war or in a popular tumult, no oblations or prayers were to be offered up for him, though his body might be buried.|| Indeed, all the ancient councils were most strict in forbidding the clergy to join in any military expedition, or be accessory to the shedding of either pagan or christian blood.

Charlemagne, attending to the remonstrances of the Holy See, and to the prayers of the bishops, published this decree: "At the entreaty of the apostolic seat, and with the advice of all our faithful, and especially

of the bishops and other priests, we correcting ourselves, and giving an example to our posterity, express our will that no priest shall ever go against the enemy, unless two or three bishops chosen by the others, for the purpose of giving benediction, and of preaching, and of reconciling the people, and with them chosen priests, who may receive them to the sacrament of penance, and celebrate mass, and take care of the sick, and administer to them the unction of holy oil with divine prayers, and above all provide that no one may depart from the world without viaticum."*

The bishop of Beauvais, on being taken prisoner by Richard I., wrote to the pope, imploring him to intercede for his deliverance, with the king of England. The pope's answer was as follows, "Celestin, bishop, servant of the servant of God, to his dear brother, Philip, bishop of Beauvais, benediction: you inform me that a calamity has befallen you; I am not astonished at it. You chose to leave the pacific government of the flock for the field of battle, the mitre for the helmet, the pastoral staff for the lance, the chasuble for the cuirass, the ring for the sword; you have sought—well, and you have found; you have struck—you are, in your turn, stricken. Nevertheless, I shall write to Richard to ask for your deliverance." The well-known answer of the king must have been therefore suggested by what had been previously pronounced by the ecclesiastical authority, of which modern historians take care that their readers shall know nothing. It should be observed, that in general, under these warlike and political bishops, some of whom were not even priests, the churches were not allowed to suffer, being governed in their absence by coadjutors, who took personal care of the flock;† and after all, it is curious to observe, that even these abuses worked to the good of the church, as when they gave rise to the foundation of one of her most illustrious orders, for it was the horror which was inspired by Manasses, the proud and impious potentate, who said, "it would be well to be archbishop of Rheims, if it were not necessary to sing mass," that induced Bruno, in order to avoid the spectacle of his vanity, in company with some other noble clerks, to withdraw from that city, and become the founder of the Car-

* De reb. gest. Ludov. Pii, tom. II. Rer. Ital. Script.

† Abbonis De Lutecia Parisiorum a Normannis obsessa, Lib. I. 23.

‡ Id.

§ Hist. Lib. VII. c. 10.

|| Lib. XXXIX. cap. 14; apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. IX.

* An. 800. Con. Gall. tom. II. 235. cap. Lib. VII. c. 91. 103.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, Lib. I. c. 9. IV. 237.

thusian family.* Nevertheless, even in Italy, in the tenth century, when evils seemed almost to have attained the climax, sanctity was not confined to the apostolic chair, for there were then several most holy prelates, such as Theodoric and Grimoald, archbishops of Pisa, Adalbert Bergomatensis, a man of great sanctity, wisdom, and courage, who defended his city against the barbarians, and restored it from ruins, Notharius bishop of Verona Gebelhard, archbishop of Ravenna, Oegidius, bishop of Tusculum, Peter and Gauzlin, bishops of Padua, and many others, who were true examples of the apostolic life in evil days. No doubt some things were formerly tolerated, which would now be deemed insufferable; but even in those cases we must be slow to judge. "I am not ignorant," says Thomassinus, "with what horror and grief, pious men, and lovers of ecclesiastical discipline, now regard such customs; and their grief is to be applauded; but neither should we condemn the number of holy men who practised or tolerated it. One and the same wisdom and charity order us now to rejoice in their abolition, and forbid us to condemn these men. It will be no small fruit if we derive from the whole review of these ages that moderation of mind, that amplitude of genius, that equability, which piously and religiously embraces and reveres the ancient discipline of the church, not always similar to itself, but always fashioned by the same wisdom and charity.†

To examine the sacerdotal character in the remaining members of the clergy, during the ages of faith, will be a task of no difficulty. The testimony of an historian who has studied in the original sources the history of the middle ages, must correspond with that delivered by Montiel, when he says, attesting the results of his own observations, "I have lived with that good, that excellent race of men, the French rectors; I have known them perfectly, both externally and internally, and I believe in my conscience that if it had existed in the time of Noah, the human race would have been saved, had there been necessary for its absolution, not merely ten, but ten thousand just.‡" "I have known many of the old French clergy," says another distinguished writer,

"and it is the remembrance of my life which is the most flattering to myself, and the most agreeable."* Addison's idea of the ministers of the Anglican discipline in its classic age, is that of "one of the three great professions greatly overburdened with practitioners, and filled with multitudes of ingenious gentlemen that starve one another;"† in which judgment he was not singular, for Burton complains, that in consequence of the avarice of the lay patrons, "poor university men like himself, having at last obtained a small benefice, are soon made weary of it, if not of their lives, so that many became malsters, graziers, chapmen, and daily converse with a company of idiots and clowns;"‡ a cruel alternative certainly for ingenious men of refined breeding. Of their genius and erudition there have been left indeed abundant monuments; still this testimony of friends and disciples is not such as would be rendered to men who followed the standard proposed to the Catholic clergy in the chapter which the church reads at the vespers of a confessor, "Beatus vir, qui inventus est sine macula, et qui post aurum non abiit, nec speravit in pecunia et thesauris." The church immediately demands, "Quis est hic, et laudabimus eum? Fecit enim mirabilia in vita sua." Yet she knew well that the voice of the people in most towns and villages during the ages of faith, would have answered without hesitation that it was their own pastor who placed his hope not in uncertain riches, but in the prayers of the poor, of whom they might have said, in the words of St. Bernard, "non evangelizat, ut comedat; sed comedit, ut evangelizet." Reader, it is guides belonging to the Catholic camp, who, while mortal, began to exhibit the glory of that second stole, and not the ingenious gentlemen described by Addison, that you are about to behold, therefore

—"Down, down; bend low
Thy knees; behold God's angel; fold thy hands:
Now shalt thou see true ministers indeed."§

God was angry with the shepherds of Israel, who fed themselves, and who fed not the flock. "What was weak ye did not strengthen, and what was sick ye did not heal; what was broken ye did not bind up, what was fallen ye did not raise, and what was lost ye did not seek: but

* Guiberti de Novigent. de vita propria, Lib. I. c. 11.

† De Vet. et Nova Disciplina, pars III. Lib. I. cap. 45.

‡ Hist. des François, tom. III. p. 377.

* Rubichon, du Mécanisme de la Société, 322.

† Spec. 21.

‡ I. 3.

§ Dante Purg. II.

with austerity ye did govern them, and with power: and my sheep are dispersed because there was no pastor, and they are made the prey of all the beasts of the field, and they are scattered. My flocks wandered over all mountains, and upon every high hill, and over the whole face of the earth they are dispersed, and there was no one to seek after them."* That the Catholic clergy realized the description of the good shepherd, as commemorated in the Gospel, is a fact of history borne out by the continued observation of mankind, which the supporters of the modern discipline were constrained repeatedly to admit, as when the Anglican Dean of Winchester, in his sermon before a convocation, in the year 1742, said, "So that if we were to consider them, not with regard to what they believe, but to the diligence with which they look after their flocks, we should think that they were the reformed at present, and that our reformation was still to come." What were the ideas respecting the sacerdotal character which prevailed in the middle ages? St. Ambrose had said, "the duty of a priest is to injure no one, and to wish to render good service to all men;" and St. Bonaventura sums up the function in these words, "It is of the sacerdotal office that all who are deprived of human assistance in this world may be able, by its tuition, to find a remedy." Now that this was a supernatural character, even the philosophy of the Gentiles might lead us to conclude. Socrates assuredly would teach us to regard the Catholic clergy as divine men; for he says, "it does not seem to me to be human to disregard all the affairs of one's self, and to neglect for so many years one's domestic interests, and to be always occupied about the interests of other men, ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ προσιώντα ὡς περ πατέρα ἢ ἀδελφὸν πρεσβύτερον, πείθοντα ἐπιμελείσθαι ἀρετῆς.† Might not one suppose that he was speaking of the men commemorated by the church, who despised the life of the world, and came to the celestial kingdoms? The fact is, that in a priest of the holy Catholic and Roman church every thing was divine—his commission, his authority, the origin of his ordination, the duties which it imposed, the fidelity with which he fulfilled them; with him was associated no idea of a beginning from below, of a political origin, which rendered it advisable to invoke Angerona, the goddess of silence, as in the old days of

Rome, when the true name of that city was never disclosed to the people: there was no break and interruption in the titles of his authority, in consequence of the adoption at one period of a rite, which being opposed to the institution of Christ, and the apostolic traditions, and besides embracing manifest heresies, was necessarily invalid.* St. Ambrose says, that "Pythagoras in forbidding his disciples to live in a popular manner, had derived the idea from the Holy Scriptures, which speak of taking off the shoes, of shaking off the dust of a common way, of leaving the people and ascending the mountains. You see then," he adds, "the separation—nothing plebeian should be found in priests, nothing vulgar, nothing common with the study, custom, and manner of the undisciplined multitude. The sacerdotal dignity requires for itself sober gravity, serious life, and singular weight, separate from the crowd."† Hugo of St. Victor shows that this is symbolically implied in the ecclesiastical ritual; "For," saith he, "bishops are consecrated on Sundays, because it was on the Sunday that the apostles received the Holy Ghost, and also as being the day of our Lord's resurrection, that they may be admonished to walk in newness of life; but priests and other ministers of the church are ordained on Saturdays, the sabbath day, that they may learn to rest for ever from all servile work, and to devote themselves to the service of God."‡ By the council of Narbonne, in 589, clerks were forbidden to loiter on the public places, or to take part in the conversations held there. "The life of a priest," says cardinal Bona, "who would worthily say mass, is divine and superhuman, and opposite to the mundane, carnal life. He who lives thus, withdraws from creatures, and adheres to God alone. God alone is in his intelligence, alone in his will, alone in his conversation, alone in his works."§

The sacerdotal character was historical as well as holy, and in both respects, no doubt, much of its excellence was owing to the ecclesiastical obligation imposed upon priests to recite the canonical office. It was to be wished, indeed, as Mabillon said, "that the will of the ministers of Christ might spontaneously be directed to

* Joan. Devoti Inst. Can. Lib. II. tit. 2.

† Epist. Lib. I. 6.

‡ Hugo St. Victor De Ecclesiasticis Officiis, Lib. I. cap. 44.

§ De Missa Tractat. Ascet. cap. II. 2.

* Ezek. xxxiv.

† Plato Apolog. 31.

fulfil the offices of piety without requiring the stimulus of law ; but such is the deprivation of customs, and such the vanity of opinions, that the intervention of laws is necessary to recal good manners, lest they should ever perish, and to retain piety, lest the forgetfulness of God should at length possess all minds oppressed with the multitude of secular cares."* That the lessons of the second nocturns of the Roman breviary might be subjected to criticism was a fact well known. Pope Benedict XIV. says, that although the historic facts as there related are of great authority, yet difficulties raised from them with modesty, and on solid foundations, may always be submitted to the judgment of the apostolic see, for all things inserted in the martyrology are not of unquestionable truth, as is clear from repeated corrections.† Granting even that some of the circumstances related in these fragments might be rather mythical than historical, still they showed what was the ancient opinions of the fact, and the moral lesson which they inculcated was salutary, often sublime, and if reason alone here is to be heard, surely the opinions of the minute philosophers of our day, who carp at such passages, can hardly be preferred to the judgment of the ancient Pythagoreans, who used to assent to all relations respecting God, and to make mention of such as seemed fabulous ; to use the words of their historians, *ὡς οὐδὲν ἀπιστοῦντες ὅ τι αὐτοῖς τὸ θεῖον ἀνεγγίναι*.‡ The breviary, in a philosophic and even literary point of view, perhaps the hardest of all books, was not merely the manual of saints, the very soul and essence of the Holy Scriptures ; it contained also inestimable treasures for the historian, for the poet, for the philosopher ; it was the history of men, and the history of Providence, bringing down to each successive age the wondrous theme of eternity begun for us in Genesis. What consolation besides must innumerable priests, at various times have derived, like Cardinal Paccia, when carried away captive from Rome, by marking the passages applicable to their personal condition, which occurred in the office of each day.§ If men can be known by knowing the books they read, the clergy ought to have been venerable in the eyes of the just, solely on the ground of their daily recitation of the

breviary. The admirable excellence of this discipline has often appeared to me in a striking manner, while travelling through France, when before arriving at some village church or lonely chapel, one sees a priest in the distance, walking solitary in the fields at even-tide, in the midst of an impious and deluded generation, meditating in his breviary the law of God, which converteth the heart ; chaunting to himself the songs of mercy and judgment, which recount the mysteries of the everlasting Gospel !

Let us now proceed to inquire what fruits of justice were associated in the ages of faith with the distribution and employment of the ecclesiastical revenues. In what light plurality of benefices was regarded by the clergy of the thirteenth century may be learned from the solemn disputation which took place before William of Paris, in the year 1238. Guiard, Bishop of Cambrai, declared, that for all the gold of Arabia, he would not retain two benefices a single night. William of Paris had admonished Philip, chancellor of the university, on his death-bed ; but he could not prevail on him to retract his opinion. Albert the Great records, that shortly after his death, as William was going to matins, a dark object interposed between him and the light, announced to the affrighted bishop the doom of the impenitent pluralist, who, though once wise and learned, confesses that he now knows nothing, being involved in the profound ignorance that reigns among the damned. The council of Agatha decreed, that to a priest who neglected to frequent his church, nothing should be given, excepting what was termed the stranger's allowance ; which was the sum that used to be paid to strange clerks, being less than what was due to those who served a church.* Unless for some just cause, canons could not be absent for more than three months, and during that time they did not receive the daily distributions, which were given only to those who were present in choir.† Sanson, Archbishop of Rheims, deprived the non-resident canons of the revenue of their prebends.‡ In the eighth century, the Irish Synod decreed that a priest should not be absent more than one day from the church ; if he staid away two days he was to fast for seven on bread and water ; if absent on a

* Mabillonii Disquisit. de cursu Gallicano, 6.

† De canonizat. sanctorum. Lib. IV. cap. 17.

‡ Jamblich de Pythagoric. Vita, cap. 28.

§ Paccha Memorie Storiche, II. cap. 1.

* Thomassinus de Vet. et nova. Eccles. Discip. III. Lib. II. c. 15.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. can. Lib. I. tit. 3.

‡ Hist. de Rheims, II.

Sunday, he was to fast for twenty days on bread and water.* Nevertheless the intellectual interests of the individual were not sacrificed. In the year 1406, Thomas Crawlegh, prebendary of Lusk, had licence to absent himself from Ireland for two years, for the purpose of studying at Oxford, with liberty to receive the fruits and profits of his benefice; and in the library of the chapter of Evreux might be read the brief of Pope Nicholas V., granting permission to Robert de Cibole, a man of great learning, dean of that cathedral, to reside in whatever place would be most favourable to the prosecution of his studies.† The clergy, in general, were allowed by the bishop, in proportion to their labours and circumstances. If the cathedral were rich, it sent funds to repair indigent parish churches; if poor, and some parish churches rich, they were to contribute to its support.‡ Possidius says, that St. Augustin made no will, as being himself one of the poor of Christ, who had not wherewithal to make one; for whatever he possessed was common to his clergy.§ The house of the priest was the house of the bishop, and the house of God. St. Augustin desired that it might not be called the priest's house, "*Nemo amplius dicat, in domum presbyteri. Ecce ubi est domus presbyteri; ubi est domus mea, ibi est domus presbyteri; alibi non habet domum nisi ubicumque habet Deum.*" "I make you my heir," says Salyrus on his death-bed to his brother, St. Ambrose, "for you had before constituted me yours, but I am to depart before you." He left no written testament, but he asked St. Ambrose to give what should seem just to the poor. St. Ambrose accordingly gave the whole: "for this," said he, "is the highest justice." Paulinus mentions that St. Ambrose left no will, having already disposed of every thing to the Church, and to the poor.|| Constantius the priest gives a similar reason to account for the blessed bishop Germain having left no will. Neither did Paulinus nor St. Hilary, bishop of Arles, leave any will, for they had reserved nothing to themselves. The third council of Carthage, and the council of Antioch made decrees against bishops who should accumulate wealth from the church, so as to leave heirs, though they might dispose of what had come to them from other sources. It was

the custom of the eastern bishops to renounce all property on their consecration, and priests on their ordination were enjoined to do the same by the third council of Carthage. By the laws of Justinian bishops were not allowed to leave by testament any wealth which had been derived from the church. St. John, the almoner patriarch of Alexandria, had found an incredible sum of gold money in the church treasury, yet when he came to die, he could say, "I thank thee, O God, for having heard my misery, when I besought thy goodness that nothing might be found in my possession when I came to die, unless one penny." St. Remi left the greatest part of what he possessed to the church, but named his two nephews as his heirs; he did not even forget twelve poor people who used to beg before the church doors, and forty widows. Sonnatius, archbishop of Rheims, followed these primitive examples, as did also Hadoinus, bishop in the year 642, and Didierius in 648. The blessed Perpetuus, archbishop of Tours, left a will which began thus: "I Perpetuus, a sinner, priest of the church of Tours, am unwilling to depart without a testament, lest the poor should be defrauded of those things which the supernatural grace had liberally and lovingly conferred upon me unworthy, and lest the goods of the priest should pass elsewhere besides to the church." When the bishop of Taragonna died intestate, the priests and deacons met, and made an inventory of every thing, even to the least article of furniture, when the whole were disposed of as he would have wished it, according to the canons.

So little avaricious was Charlemagne, that he made a decree, that if any bishop or priest died intestate, his goods were all to go to the Church which he served. King John of England, on the contrary, claimed for himself, on these occasions. Herardus, archbishop of Tours, made a rule in his synodical constitutions, "that whatever was acquired in sacred orders, should be left to the respective churches." Aldricus, a bishop in the reign of Louis le Debonnaire, left a will bequeathing all his goods to the churches, monasteries, clerks, to the poor, and to his servants.* This was always the motive assigned by bishops for making a will, lest the Church and the poor should be defrauded. The blessed Udalricus, before his death, gave even the furniture of his episcopal palace to the poor: and the blessed Gebbard, bishop of Constance, being of a noble and

* *Capit. Canonum Hiber. XXV. apud Dacher. Spicileg. IX.* † *Hist. d'Evreux.*

‡ *Thomassinus III. 11. 15.*

§ *In Vita, cap. 31.*

|| *Paulinus in ejus Vita, c. 19.*

* *Baluz. Misc. tom. III. p. 83.*

rich family, prevailed upon his brethren to give him a portion, that he might apply to the use of the poor, what would be otherwise spent in the luxury and pomps of the world. The blessed Burchard, bishop of Worms, left in his house, on his death, the sacred vessels of the Church, and three denarii; for every thing had been given to the poor.* When the blessed Hugo, bishop of Lincoln, was near death, he was admonished to make a will, according to custom; he replied, "I am weary of this custom, every where introduced into the Church; I neither had nor have any thing which is not of the Church, which I was commissioned to govern. Nevertheless, lest the fisc should carry it off, let all that I seem to possess, be given to the poor."† St. Bernard relates that Atto, bishop of Troyes, in his sickness, gave all that he had to the poor, and confirmed it when he was not in danger of death. John of Salisbury gives the Testament of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, and his letter to the king, in which last he says, that the furniture which he retains till his death, will be of no use to any one but to the poor, as he has pronounced the most dire curse on all who would deprive them of inheriting it. He left all to the poor; and when the blessed Stephen, bishop of Dieu, in 1213, was pressed to make a will, he replied, "It is needless, since every thing belongs to my spouse, which I undertook to govern."‡ It was not till the sixteenth century, that the new custom prevailed of relations becoming the heirs of those who held ecclesiastical benefices. The blessed Anno, archbishop of Cologne, had reserved nothing for himself, but his ring and his sacred furniture. His words were these: "Why doth the estimation of men celebrate me, as one of the great and rich? Lo, besides the utensils of my chapel, my pontificals, and this ring, I know not whether I possess even one denarium. For neither do I collect the treasures of insatiable avarice in my cloisters, which could attract the greedy, having carefully provided that I should not leave so much as one farthing on my death for their talons."§

Of the liberality and goodness with which the episcopal domains were governed, a remarkable evidence incidentally occurs in the canons of the council of Orleans, held in the year 511, which decrees, "that if through humanity, a bishop should lend

Church lands to be cultivated, no length of time should give rise to any prescription."

In the synodical constitutions of Stephen, bishop of Paris, in 1503, the clergy were forbidden to leave the goods of the Church by will to other persons, or places, than to their churches. He could not declare their wills invalid, but he reminded them of their canonical duty. William Avernus, bishop of Paris, hearing that on the death of an intestate canon, 3000 marks of silver devolved to him, shuddered at this treasure of the mammon of iniquity, and ordered it all to be expended on the poor. Striking his hands together, he replied, "Far be it from me, but, alas! the wretched man! let his money perish with him." St. Charles Borromeo left all that he possessed to the hospital, to the clergy, and to the poor of Milan.*

William of Malmesbury says, that Rudolph, archbishop of Canterbury, and successor of St. Anselm, acquired nothing by the amplitude of his fortunes, but the power of conferring more benefits upon whom he would.† St. Augustin would not ordain any man who did not relinquish all his private possessions, and resolve to live from thenceforth upon what the Church would allow him, in common with the rest of her clergy. This did Paulinus, this did St. Cyprian, who abandoned great wealth, though nevertheless he had a country house at the time of his martyrdom; this did St. Ambrose, this did Felix, this did Nepotianus, as testified by St. Jerome; this did St. Martin, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, Theodoret, Epiphanius, Porphyrius of Gaza, and innumerable others. The alms of the laity, enriched the Church,‡ but the clergy knew at the same time that the property of the Church was nothing else but the vows of the faithful, the price of sins, and the patrimony of the poor.

Julianus Pomerius observes, that this discipline is not hard when every one adopts it; that what seems difficult to those who do not practise it, becomes easy to those who observe it; as soon as it becomes a custom, it disturbs no one.§ This discipline was generally observed through the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries; though the obligation does not seem to have continued, since clerks might retain their patrimony, while it was expected that they would

* Baron. an. 1026.

† Surius Novem. 17. cap. 28.

‡ Rainald. an. 1213.

§ Surius die 4 Decemb. cap. 31.

* Thomassinus de vet. et nova Discip. III. Lib. II. cap. 38—cap. 50.

† De Gestis Pontiff. Anglorum, Lib. I.

‡ Id III. Lib. III. cap. 3.

§ De Vita contemp. Lib. II. c. 10.

reserve for themselves only what was necessary to support them in common with others. Until the tenth century, the life of the clergy in community, continued to be a great obstacle to corruption and avarice. The Roman council in 1059, under Pope Nicholas II. invited all the clergy to this society of common or apostolic life.* At this a hundred and thirteen bishops assisted ; the decrees were sent into France, and during the succeeding ages, till the sixteenth century, numerous communities of clergy were formed with this object. Cardinal Bellarmine shows that all theologians taught that clerks might only reserve for themselves what was necessary for a decent subsistence ; and that what was superfluity was to be given to the poor.† Hence, say the ancient writers, we should not wonder, or be offended at the riches of the Church. A priest, to whom the care of dispensation is committed, not only without cupidity, but also with the praise of piety, receives from the people things to be distributed, and faithfully dispenses what he receives ; he leaves all his own either to his relations, or to the poor, or to the Church, and through the love of poverty, makes himself of the number of the poor, so that from the funds which he ministers to the poor, he also himself as voluntarily poor, may live.‡

Manual labour was prescribed not alone to many of the religious orders, of which St. Augustin saw whole congregations of men and women at Rome, and Milan, thus employed. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, cultivated a garden ; Felix, priest and martyr, was a tiller of the ground. St. Hilary, archbishop of Arles, with his clerks, worked with their hands. The clergy were exhorted to labour in the apostolic constitutions. The blessed Spiridion, bishop of Cyprus, tended a flock of sheep. Sozomen says, that the holy Bishop Zeno, when past his one hundredth year, never ceased labouring with his hands, though he held the keys of the richest church. Fulgentius advised all his clergy to have a garden, that they might cultivate it with their own hand ; and Gregory of Tours says, that Nicetius, bishop of Lyons, continued to work in his father's house, that he might experience bodily labour. Under Charlemagne and the successors of his race, the clergy were exhorted to labour by the councils ; and the rules of Chrodegangus prescribed occasionally, even

the most servile offices to the clergy.* Manual labour was prescribed and practised by Bishop Theodulph, by Hincmar, by Actardus, bishop of Nantes, by Adalbert, bishop of Prague, by St. Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, by Bernard, bishop of Hildesheim. Similarly after the tenth century, Petrus of Damian, archbishop of Mainz, being cast into prison by his relation, the emperor Otho, passed his time in writing out the Psalter in letters of gold, and took such pleasure in that work, that when he obtained liberty to go out, he refused to leave the prison till he had finished it. In the year 1207, Julianus, a holy bishop, having given every thing to the poor, supported himself and a companion, by making baskets of rushes. Innumerable priests in the thirteenth century, worked with their hands voluntarily. The blessed Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, had often been employed in the fields, in rustic labour, with his brethren of the Cistercian order.†

Sophronius relates, that a certain bishop abandoned his see, and went in disguise to Jerusalem, where he offered himself to serve the builders. At this time, Ephremius, a pious and charitable man, was count of the east ; and under him men were repairing the public edifices after an earthquake. His attention was so much excited by the assiduity and good conduct of this strange labourer, that at length he began to question him respecting his origin. It was not till after much importunity, and upon condition of observing inviolable secrecy, that he extorted the secret from the humble workman, who confessed that he was a bishop, who for God had come to an unknown place to support himself with the labour of his hands. Ephremius gave glory to God, and exclaimed how many hidden servants hath God, known only to himself.‡

Commerce and trade were strictly forbidden to the clergy in the first five centuries. The councils of Carthage were express. St. Ambrose showed the necessity of this law, to preserve that tranquillity of mind which is essential to the sacerdotal character. For that is tranquillity of mind and temperance, which is neither affected by the study of gain, nor harassed by the fear of indigence. The same lesson was inculcated by St. Augustin,§ St. Jerome,|| and by Epiphanius, in his exposition of the Catho-

* Can. 4. + De clericis, Lib. I. c. 27.

† Julianus Pomerius de Vita contemp. Lib. II. cap. II vide etiam Thomass. III. Lib. III. cap. 1.—cap. 8.

* Can. 13, 14.

† Thomass. III. Lib. III. cap. 9—cap. 16.

‡ Pratum Spirituale, cap. 36.

§ De opere Monac. c. 15. de verbis dom. in Mart. Ser. XIX. || Epist. ad Nepotian.

lic faith. Pope Leo enforced it with powerful reasons;* and the council of Chalcedon prohibited the clergy from involving themselves in any manner in secular affairs. The councils of France during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, enforced the same discipline, as did also those of Spain. The ships of churches did not excite even a suspicion of trade. In the council of Mayence, under Charlemagne, the prohibition is repeated; so also in that of London, in 1175, under pain of anathema.† To the same effect was the sentence of the council of Avignon in 1279, that of Cologne in 1536, and that of Milan, under St. Charles.‡

The clergy were prohibited from conducting the affairs of lay nobles, by a council under Urban II. in 1089, and by that of London in 1102.

St. Cyprian would not permit mass to be said for Victor after his death, because, contrary to the canons, he had nominated as guardian Faustinus, who was a priest; and he adds this reason to the authority of his predecessors, "that he did not deserve to be named at the altar of God in the prayers of the priests who had wished to withdraw priests from the altar;" priests were not permitted to exercise the office of judge, or of any member of the secular courts, by the same council of London, and by that of Rheims in 1131, which extended the prohibition to the practice of medicine. These prohibitions as to law and medicine, were enforced by the second and fourth councils of Lateran, and of Tours, in 1163.

However, it is clear, that the clergy were often called to conduct the councils of kings and princes. William of Malmesbury says, "that under Ethelwulf, king of England, the greatest destruction would have fallen upon the kingdom and the Church, had not Swithin and Alstan, bishops of Worcester and Sherburn, come to the aid of the state, in the management of the finances, and of the war. Edmund, king of England, called St. Dunstan to his councils, and the blessed Herebert, archbishop of Cologne, accompanied Otho III. into Italy, to conduct the affairs of his kingdom. It is remarkable to read the reasons assigned by Pope Gregory IX. for prohibiting clerks from accepting civil offices; "Because it is the sacerdotal office to hurt no one, but to wish to do good to all."

Many holy men refused ecclesiastical

dignities, from an unwillingness to be entangled in temporal affairs. St. Domnole, beloved of Clotaire, was to be raised to the see of Avignon, but he refused, beseeching the king that he would not permit his simplicity to be fatigued amidst sophistical senators, and philosophic judges.*

It is certain, however, that bishops and abbots sat in all the ancient parliaments. History records with honour, the names of several who presided over the councils of kings, such as the abbot Suger, whom St. Bernard would never have praised, if his conduct had been contrary to holy discipline; and yet he says of him, in a letter to Pope Eugene III. "I have known the man, and seen him faithful and prudent in temporals, fervent and humble in spirituals, and what is most difficult, conducting himself in both without reproach. With Cæsar, he is as one of the Roman court; with God, as if one of the court of heaven."

Tilpin, archbishop of Rheims, deserved by his great ability, the confidence reposed in him by Charlemagne, who always kept him at his side, that he might consult him on every occasion. He made him follow his expedition into Spain. This was he that was so famous in old romance, under the name of Turpin. The real prelate had all the qualities of a great bishop; zeal, learning, prudence, lofty views, and the love of justice. It was Tilpin who placed monks in the cathedral, and who began the construction of the church, and library, which were finished by Hincmar.†

The name of Peter Abeillard, abbot of St. Gildas, is at the bottom of the most important charters of the dukes of Brittany, which shows that his merit and abilities gave him an eminent post in the state.‡

In the year 1190, Philip Augustus, making an expedition beyond sea, left the regency of the kingdom in the hands of the queen, and of William, archbishop of Rheims. At the court of St. Louis, and of Philip III. his son, no one was so distinguished in the administration, as Matthew, abbot of St. Denis; and Charles VII. in 1468, called to his council the bishop of Paris. Lancfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, was made regent of England, in 1099:§ and William Rufus committed the administration of his kingdom to William, bishop of Durham.|| Alexander III. sent

* Greg. Turon. I. VI. c. 9.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, Liv. 1. 87.

‡ Lobineau Hist. de Bret. tom. II. 252.

§ Matt. Paris, cap. XV.

|| Williel. Malmesbur. Lib. IV. p. 120.

* In Decret. cap. 23. Epist. 92.

† Can. 10.

‡ Thomassin. III. Lib. III. cap. 17—cap. 21.

very angry letters to Richard, archbishop of Canterbury, because the bishops of Winchester, Ely, and Norwich, were suffered to remain so long at court, to the neglect of their churches; and the archbishop returned answer, by the pen of Peter of Blois, that these were good men; that it was not a novelty for bishops to assist at the councils of kings; for as they surpass others in virtue and wisdom, so are they considered more expeditious and efficient in the administration of the republic.* When Richard I. assumed the reins of government, he committed the administration of the whole kingdom to William, bishop of Ely; and on his return from Palestine, he gave the same authority to Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury; and in the reign of Henry II. the bishops of Winchester, Ely, and Norwich, had been chief justices over all other judges, and had distinguished themselves by their wisdom and moderation; for though they acted against the canons in accepting office, the king's command, and perhaps the necessity of the times, obliged them to do it. Roger, bishop of Salisbury, would not accept of this office, till he yielded through holy obedience to St. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury. Under Edward III. almost all the great officers of the palace and kingdom were clerks, the chancellor, the treasurer, the keeper of the little seal, ten masters of chancery, and innumerable others; but through the remonstrance of pope Urban V., the laity began to be more employed in the government. Gregory IX. consented that Henry III. might retain bishops in his councils. "You assert that through the pious devotion of your ancestors, the custom was introduced, that the kings of England should always have some bishops counsellors of their kingdom. We, therefore, believing in your pious intention, and hoping to provide for the utility both of your kingdom, and of the church, grant faculties to the bishops whom you have summoned for this purpose, that they may assist you in council as utility and virtue may require."† The king gave the office of justice to abbots, which went beyond the pope's intention, so that the bishop of Lincoln wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury, exciting him to prevent such impiety; but the king kept to his point, and the archbishop replied that there was no hope of redress till the next council, though the bishop of Lincoln

continued to produce canons and testimonies of every kind against the practice. If we pass into Germany, we shall find the instances still more numerous. Gebehard, bishop of Eichstad, was chief minister to Henry II., and the blessed Anno, archbishop of Cologne, had governed during his minority; and it was not till after his departure that Henry gave way to all the intemperance of youth. Anno, on accepting the office, had procured a decree that always it should be the bishop in whose diocese the king might be remaining, who was to take care that the republic came to no injury, and who was to answer and decide the causes brought to the king. This was in 1062. The education of the king, and the ordination of all public affairs, were in the hands of the archbishop of Mainz and Cologne, occasionally joined with the archbishop of Bremen. Richard I. ascribes the success of his proceedings in Germany to Adalbert, archbishop of Salzburg. "We return multiplied thanks to your paternity," he says in a letter to him, "for having studied so efficaciously to further the deliverance of our pledges, whom the Duke of Austria held; for whatever was done to our advantage in that article we know was done by your diligence, but what you did over and above shall be extolled for ever, and the fame of your goodness shall never perish; for you did what you ought to do, since second after the lord pope you hold the place of blessed Peter."* John of Salisbury says, that in his time the king of Denmark, dismissing the archbishop, resolved to govern by himself; but that he soon called him back again, and honoured him as a father.† John Magnus records in his history of the Goths, that king Eric called to his councils Henry, archbishop of Upsal, by whose advice and pious exhortations the devout king ordered the course of his life. Throughout the whole of the north of Germany, the ministers of the altar were made ministers of the royal court, as pope Paschal II. said; Yet secular dignities did not involve them in secular vices. The emperor Otho I., being called away to the eastern parts of the empire, committed the west to the government of the archbishop of Cologne. In Spain the result is found similar. Memorable is the example related by Roderic, archbishop of Toledo, speaking of

* Baron. an. 1176. † Rainald. Ann. 1231. n. 51.

* Germania Sacra, tom. II. 956.

† Baron. an. 1167.

‡ Epist. 22.

king Veremundus. He was of a noble and truly royal mind, and adorned with all kingly virtues, yet he abdicated the crown in the midst of his glory; for he recollected, and repeatedly considered, that he had been formerly initiated in the office of deacon, and he saw that the duties of that sacred dignity could hardly be united with a crown. He gave up his kingdom to Alfonso, his relation, in whose palace he lived many years, observing the law of celibacy. This was before the year 800. Casimir being a deacon, and a monk of Cluny, when restored to the crown of Poland, might have had a dispensation from the pope; but the urgent distresses of his unhappy country prescribed a different conduct from that of Veremundus. Cardinal Ximenes, of the Franciscan order, and archbishop of Toledo, was for a long time ruler of the kingdom; and it appears that formerly the archbishops of Toledo, by their office, were always the chief ministers of the king. As Thomassinus says, "it was not ambition, but the religion of kings, the piety and faith of prelates, and the ardour and contention of both to defend and restore the dignity of the Church and kingdom, which laid the foundation of the wondrous authority of this see." The office of prebendary or chancellor, was almost exclusively reserved for bishops and abbots, in France, England, Spain, Portugal, and Germany during all these ages. Yet when St. Thomas of Canterbury was elected, he sent back the great seals to the king, renouncing the office of chancellor, lest he should be straitened by bonds of the court; at which the king was angry in heart, for in fact, while chancellor, he had repressed the audacity of the king's flatterers, who like hawks conspired to prey upon the goods of the Church, as Matthew of Paris says.* The fact of this influence of the clergy in the councils of kings, instead of sanctioning the imputations of the modern sophists, is, on the contrary, only a fresh evidence of the extraordinary thirst and fulfilment of justice, which characterized the middle ages. Surely it was well for a people when a counsellor stood near the throne, to whom a just monarch could say,

—"Speak, my lord,
And we will hear, note, and believe in heart
That what you speak is in your conscience
washed
As pure as sin in baptism."

* Thomassinus, Pars III. Lib. III. cap. 22. 25.

Well was it for a people when a holy churchman could furnish proof of the charm of justice, and the empire which it exercises over men; so that of him history could record, as it testified of Suger, that the king respected him as if he had been his father, and feared him as if he had been his master. The old books of the Anglo Saxons are full of letters from kings addressed to holy men, written in a style of filial respect, and great humility. Thus Ælfbwald, king of the East Saxons, says, in his letter to St. Boniface, "We wish you to know with what gratitude we heard that our littleness was commended to your holy prayers, and that your benignity had offered the solemn masses and prayers to God in our behalf. We shall endeavour to fulfil with a devout mind what you desire respecting the monasteries of our kingdom. That as the predestination of God hath placed you a pastor over the people, so we wish that you should feel our protection as your patron"* Hear what say the laws of the Visigoths, "The priests of God, to whom for remedy of the oppressed and the poor, the care is divinely committed, are, with paternal solicitude, to admonish the judges who should oppress the people, that they may amend and reverse the things wrongfully judged; and if such judges should bear false sentence, then the bishop in whose territory it occurs having convened the judges, shall, in council with priests, or other fit men, terminate the affair according to justice: but if the judge should continue obstinate, then it will be lawful for the bishop to interpose in behalf of the oppressed, till the case is submitted to our serenity."† In like manner, the council of Arles, in the year 813, reminded the bishops that they were to protect the poor from all oppression, and that they must address themselves to the king to make it cease. In latter times, I grant it would seem as if places of high official power were naturally and properly reserved for unprincipled libertines; but when rulers were willing to be guided by holy men of learning and wisdom, why should philosophers have refused to come to their assistance? Many of the Pythagoreans were great politicians, who ruled Italic cities, and founded free states; Many Christian pontiffs were the same; no

* S. Bonif. Epist. LXXVI.

† Legis Wisigothorum, Lib. II. 30.

‡ Jamblich. Pythagoric. Vit. cap. 27.

doubt the clergy were masters, because virtue must always be supreme. "Under every law," as Pindar, who was himself a Pythagorean, says, "a man of upright tongue, εὐθύγλωστος ἀνὴρ, must excel."* Diogenes being about to be sold by some robbers who had taken him prisoner, put himself up to sale, crying out, "Who wants to buy a master?" At least if the clergy did receive a government which was thrust upon them, surely, as the Athenians once said of themselves, "they did nothing wonderful, οὐδ' ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τρέπον; and therefore men of natural views have no right to condemn them."† And besides, now that we have seen what was the ideal of all power and authority in the ages of faith, why might not a holy priest reply, in the words of Telemachus, to those who would tax him with ambitious thoughts, "I should have no objection to possess from God what you ridicule."

ἡ φῆς τοῦτο κάκιστον ἐν ἀνθρώποισι τεύχθαι ;
οὐ μὲν γάρ τι κακὸν βασιλεύμεν.‡

What men would a lover of justice wish to see enthroned upon the vatican in preference to a Leo or a Gregory? Here the speculation has been verified by the fact; for at Rome, where the desire of Plato has been more than realized, the clergy in possession of that power are distinguished by the utmost modesty, the utmost grace, the greatest tenderness for the poor, the greatest gentleness and condescension for all men; and if it were not that mercy and charity seem to be carried sometimes almost to excess by the utmost justice. Now, as Glaucus says of Socrates, when the latter had delivered his famous sentence, that philosophy should be united with political power, and should govern, "I am aware that I have uttered a word which will cause a multitude of men, and such as are not altogether to be despised, to rush upon me, casting off their cloaks, and stripping their arms, and each taking up whatever instrument is near, in order to attack me in a body, as if to perform instantly some famous exploit."§ Nevertheless I can find nothing in history or in philosophy, to awaken a suspicion that the word is an error. One has accused the obstinacy of the two parties of Henry IV. and Gregory VII., "without remarking," says Michelet, "that it was not a

struggle of men. The men tried to approach each other, and never could. Reconciliation was impossible; nothing can reconcile spirit and matter, flesh and spirit."* The pontiff was for eternal justice, and the law of God. We need not ask for what cause the other contended.

Churchmen did not seek office or cling to it from ambition. In 1149 the abbot Suger, while regent of France, wrote as follows to the king, pressing his return: "The disturbers of the public repose are again active, while you, who are bound to defend your subjects, remain like a captive in a foreign land. Seigneur, what can occupy your thoughts, to leave thus at the mercy of wolves the sheep confided to you? No, you are not permitted to remain absent any longer. We implore, therefore, your highness, we exhort your piety, we demand of the goodness of your heart, we conjure you by the faith which reciprocally binds the prince and the subjects, to protract your stay in Syria no longer than the festival of Easter, lest a longer delay should render you guilty in the eyes of the Lord, of breaking the oath which you took on receiving the crown. You have reason, I think, to be satisfied with our conduct. We have placed in the hands of the knight templers the money which you had resolved to send us. Besides this, we have repaid the Count de Vermandois the sum which he had lent us for your service. Your lands and your men enjoy at present a happy peace. You will find your houses and your palace in good condition, by means of the repairs which we have conducted. But you see me now in the decline of life, and I dare say that the occupations in which I engaged for the love of God, and through attachment to your person, have greatly accelerated my old age." Lewis did, accordingly, return, and resume the reins of government, though his absence was more beneficial under Suger, than his presence without him. From that time Suger retired almost completely within the walls of his abbey of Saint Denis.

The correspondence of Alcuin with Charlemagne presents a similar example. In one letter, he restrains the zeal of the emperor respecting the payment of tithes.† In another, he recommends him to treat the Huns, who are his prisoners, with indulgence, and to show clemency to his enemies.‡ In another, he entreats him

* Pyth. Od. II.

‡ Od. I. 390.

† Thucyd. Lib. I. c. 76.

§ De Repub. Lib. V.

* Hist. de France, II. 177.

† Epist. 28.

‡ Epist. 32.

to beware of the dangers of the expedition of Beneventum. "Perhaps," he observes, "some one will say, Why does he meddle with what is foreign to him? Let such a person know that nothing which concerns your prosperity is foreign to me; for I declare that it is dearer to me than the health of my body, or the duration of my life. You are the happiness of the kingdom, the safety of the people, the honour of the churches, the protector of all the faithful of Christ: it is under the shadow of your power, and under the shelter of your piety, that the divine grace has granted to us the practice of a religious life, and to serve Jesus Christ in peace and quietness: it is, then, just and necessary, that with an attentive mind and a devoted heart, we should be occupied with your fortune and with your health; and that we should invoke God for this end, thou excellent king and worthy of all honour."* In another letter to an archbishop, in the year 796, we find him retired from court and living in his monastery of Tours. "Let your fraternity know that I your son desire ardently to lay down the burden of the affairs of the world, that I may serve God alone. Every man has need to prepare himself with vigilance, in order to meet God; much more an old man, worn down with years and infirmities."† Charlemagne desired to retain him at court, and to take him with him to Rome. "It is a shame," he writes to him, "to prefer the smoky roofs of the people of Tours to the golden palaces of the Romans;" but Alcuin was firm. "I could not endure the fatigues of the journey. I implore you to let me finish my career near St. Martin: all the energy, all the dignity of my body is vanished, and vanishes day by day. I shall never recover it in this world. I had hoped in these last days to see once more the face of your beatitude, but the progress of my infirmities obliges me to renounce that hope. I conjure, therefore, your goodness, let not that mind so holy, that will so beneficent, which are in you, be irritated at my weakness: permit, with pious compassion, that a fatigued man take repose, that he pray for you, and that he prepare himself in confession and tears to appear before the Eternal Judge."‡

Pascasius Radbert describes Wala, the abbot of Corby, as a consummate statesman. "In the senate his genius excelled

that of all others, so that if he were asked concerning any of the affairs in hand, immediately without delay, as if from a fountain, flowed the wisest counsel that could be found or given."* Nevertheless, he had to defend him from the charge of those who said that he occupied himself too much with affairs of state. "It is the duty," he observes, "of a good man, of one like Wala, from his birth and connexions, endued with great authority in the state, to consult for the welfare of his country and of his fellow citizens. But why, you ask, did the holy and mortified Wala return to take part in the horrors of worldly society, when the empire was falling to pieces? Because he saw the evils, and wished to obviate them, to resist for the faith of the kingdom and of the king, for the love of his country and of his people, for the religion of the churches, and the salvation of his fellow citizens, which were all dearer to him than his own life."†

If from the object we pass to investigate the effects of this influence, the assertions of the sophists of the last century will all be found totally erroneous. There are not wanting writers of research at present, who do not need to be told this. Witness what is said by a modern historian of France, speaking of the legislative assembly in Gaul, in the year 614. "Many articles of a remarkable liberality," says Michelet, "indicate the ecclesiastical hand."‡ Who were the men that used to interpose between rulers and their subjects, to save the innocent from oppression, and to stem the violence of arbitrary power? Were not they members of the clergy of whom the church sings, "*Isti sunt triumphatores et amici Dei qui, contemnentes jussa principum, meruerunt præmia æterna?*"

The splendour attached to the episcopal dignity in the middle ages, has given offence to some writers; but Petrus Alliacensis argued wisely, while reproving certain monks who condemned the grandeur which holy bishops had often observed. "These magnificent provisions, whether in houses or vestments, or other exterior ornaments, which they style pomps, were introduced from the time of blessed Pope Sylvester, both for sovereign pontiffs, and for other bishops, and they were solely

* Vita ejus apud Mabill. Acta S. Ordinis Benedict. Sæcul. IV. pars I.

† Id. Lib. II.

‡ Michelet, Hist. de France, I. 249.

* Epist. 105.

‡ CVI. Epist.

† Id. 168.

designed for extolling the glory of Christ and of his church ; to observe which exteriorly with the moderation of temperance, and interiorly without losing humility, is not vanity or vice, but virtue and merit. So that those are vehemently to be censured who, under pretence of humility, proudly inveigh against this custom, and blame on account of its observance the episcopal state.*

Willégisus, archbishop of Mayence, in the tenth century, the friend of kings and princes, was indeed a man of almost royal magnificence, but what prelate ever evinced a more apostolic spirit, or was more profound in the science of the Scriptures? This was he who having been the son of a wheelwright, caused to be painted on the wall of his bed-chamber, into which no one was allowed to enter but his chaplain, a cart-wheel, over which was written, "Willégise, memento quid modo sis : quid antea fueris, et quid in brevi necessario futuris sis ;" which artifice of humility was not known till his death, when it seemed so admirable to the emperor Henry, that he ordered that a wheel should in future be the emblem of the city of Mayence, which it retains on its shield to this day.†

We now come to the frugality and moderation of the clergy in their character of dispensers. St. Jerome wished that Nepotianus might have a table at which the poor and strangers and Christ might be occasional guests. He shows how shameful it would be, if he were to entertain with magnificence the civil magistrates. A secular judge will respect more a continent than a rich cleric, and will more venerate your sanctity than your riches.

By the statutes of the synod of Nantes, no priest was allowed to have more than two dishes at table, excepting when he received the Duke of Brittany and his officers.

It was the custom of the Teutonic knights, that two of them should eat out of one dish, as a mark of poverty and humility. St. Ambrose said, "I think it is the part of ecclesiastics to decline the banquets of strangers, that they may show hospitality to travellers, and that from that caution there may be no ground of offence given ; for the convivial meetings of strangers have occupations belonging to them, and they nourish the desire of feasting. Frequently, too, fables from the world

creep in. You cannot close your ears ; to prohibit them is thought pride. Cups also creep in contrary to the will." Possidius describes the great simplicity of St. Augustin's life. Dining in common with his clergy, the number of cups was defined for every one ; his vessels were of wood or baked earth ; his dress, neither splendid nor abject. Hear how he speaks of it himself to the people. "I wish that your sanctity would offer such things as I can decently use. For example, I am offered precious linen. Perchance this might become a bishop, though it doth not become Augustin, that is a man who is a sinner, born of poor parents. Men would soon say that I had found precious vestments, which I could never have had either in my father's house or in my secular profession. It would not become me. I ought to have such as I might give to my brother, if he should be in want. I wish to receive such as a priest, such as a deacon or subdeacon can decently possess ; for I receive all things in common. If any one should give me better I sell it, that since it cannot be a common vest, the price of the vest may be common. I sell and give to the poor. If it delight him that I should have one, let him give me such as I may wear without blushing ; for I confess to you, that I blush to wear precious clothes, because it doth not become this profession, this admonition, these limbs, these white hairs."*

The fathers of the fourth council of Carthage, decreed, "That the bishop should have his 'hospitulum' not far from the church ; that the bishop should have vile furniture, and keep a poor table, and that he should seek the authority of his dignity by faith and the merits of his life."† Severus Sulpicius, in his life of the blessed Martin, gives an example of this episcopal life, yet when he entertained guests, he had water for their hands, and he washed their feet. Thus he received Sulpicius himself, who says, "Nor did we attempt to contradict him in this, for I felt so oppressed by his authority, that it would have seemed a crime not to acquiesce." Such was also the life of Paulinus, who from a state of great riches, embraced voluntary poverty, and became most rich in sanctity.‡ He sent Severus a present of a wooden dish, and begged in return the gift of an earthen one, saying, "We love fragile vessels, be-

* Rainald. an. 1294.

† Annal. Hirsangiens.

* De diversis Serm. 50.

† Can. XIV. XV. Ferr. cap. 71.

‡ S. August. de Civitate Dei, XIX. 20.

cause we know that it is in such we have committed to us the treasure of the Lord." He used to joke about his cook, who could dress vegetables so well that a Roman senator would not disdain them. Faustus, abbot of Lerins, afterwards a bishop, and Lupus, the mirror of French bishops, both retained monastic simplicity in their episcopal houses, as did also the blessed Epiphanius and the holy bishop Germain, who even used to sleep upon a bed of ashes.* St. Hilary, archbishop of Arles, always travelled on foot. Constantine was greatly struck at the humble appearance of the bishops: he supplied them with public conveyances to come to the councils of Nice and Arles. St. Athanasius, recalled from exile, made his triumphal entry into Alexandria mounted upon a poor colt. Generally, in the middle ages, bishops travelled as we still can witness in Italy, mounted on a pacific mule, with a few of their clergy by their side, and others walking before. Gregory Nazianzen describes the simplicity of St. Basil's life. "He had but one tunic, one cloak, his bed was upon the ground, his food bread and salt, and his drink the fountain water."† Gregory blames certain false imitators, who would have his dress, and bed, and food, but not his spirit and works; for his manner of life was not studied out of affectation, but perfectly simple and unpremeditated.

Gregory Nyssen gives a similar portrait in his life of Gregory Thaumaturgus, who resolved that there should not be found in his possession on his death wherewithal to bury his body; he would hasten on his journeys of charity mounted on a mule. Yet Gregory Nyssen did not disdain a chariot; for these men were equally humble in whatever manner they were carried. St. Chrysostom fled from the luxury of the age, and would therefore eat alone, that he might not furnish a pretence for employing the goods of the church in good living. Palladius the bishop, gives a detailed description of St. Chrysostom's frugal life, yet St. Chrysostom inveighed against certain of the laity, who condemned many of the clergy on the ground of their living well; saying that the priests of the law were far more liberally entertained; and that at all events, those who gave nothing to the clergy, ought not to reprove them for having too much;‡ and he added to those laymen who condemn-

ed the clergy, "When St. Paul said, 'having food and raiment let us therewith be content;' did he speak only to masters? By no means; but to all men. But you say, he takes a bath as I do, he eats, he drinks, he is clothed, he has the care of a house, why should he be a prelate before me? What, had not the apostles freedmen who served them? and when they were on a journey, did not noble men and women entertain them who would have given their lives for them? And if a priest takes care of his body, he is not to be blamed, for if he were to be confined to his bed by sickness, how could he then visit the churches?" Theodoret records the lives of many other holy bishops, who still retained all the frugality of monastic manners. Such were James of Nisibe, and Aphtonius; and Cassian gives a similar account of Archebius. Such were all these holy bishops, hating and despising what the world loved, and loving what the world scorned and abhorred.

St. Gregory the Great said, that he did not object to occasional feasts of charity, provided "that the life of no absent person were there criticised, that no one were reprehended or ridiculed, and that not the vain fables of secular affairs, but words of sacred lessons should be heard at them, when superfluities were not given to the body, but only its weakness refreshed, that it may be more capable of action and the exercise of virtue."* St. Gregory was of the most amiable courtesy. When Eulogius, a bishop, was recovered from a fit of sickness, he sent him a horse, but he declared that he himself was not able to ride on an ass, when five were sent to him from Sicily. Fortunatus, a bishop, has written the life of the blessed Germain, bishop of Paris. He says that the holy man had but one tunic and one pallium; that he travelled on horseback, and always either spoke, or sung, or heard some word respecting God; but when he sat down at table, there was immediately a minister to recite divine colloquies.

Bede relates that when the king gave a horse, adorned with royal trappings, to the holy bishop Aidan, that he might use it when necessary, for he always went on foot, Aidan gave him in return a poor man; and when the king complained, he appeased him by saying, "Is that offspring of a mare dearer to thee than a son of God?" The king was seized with such reverence, that he fell on his knees, to the great surprise

* Surius die 5 Jul.

† Orat. XX.

‡ In Epist. ad Phil. Hom. IX.

* Leg. II. Epist. 37.

of the holy man; who expressed his fears privately to others, that so humble a king was not long for this world. St. Cæsareus said, that bishops were bound to the utmost frugality, however rich the church might be. "Not only the tithes are not ours, but whatever we have received from God more than is necessary for us, we ought to give to the poor."* In these ages the laity were taught that they too, beside their tenths, ought to give their superfluity to the poor. In private, John the Almoner, patriarch of Alexandria, would retain nothing costly or himself. Sometimes a rich citizen would send him a woollen covering for his bed, with a large sum, saying, that if he loved him, he would use it. John complied for one night only, and his domestics heard him condemn himself for such luxury, while so many poor were starving with cold. At dawn of day he started from that precious bed, and sent it to be sold for the poor. Pardulus, bishop of Lyons, in his life of Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, gives a wonderful account of the simplicity and austerity of that holy man's living. In the time of Louis the Pious, the clergy were ordered to lay aside all belts and ornaments of gold and silver,† which when Tarasius succeeded to the patriarchal see of Constantinople, he also prohibited to all members of the clergy.‡ Balsamon, illustrating the canon of a council, shows the indecorum of a clerk wearing a military ornament, and the fathers of the seventh general council expressed the same sentiment, adding, "all marks of boasting and bodily ornament are foreign from the sacerdotal order."§ Nevertheless, Ives, bishop of Chartres, writing to Pope Paschal the Second, appears to have been persuaded that, in his age, it was necessary to keep up the respect of men for the episcopal office, by some exterior marks of dignity;|| and this is the more remarkable, as Ives was deeply learned in the ancient discipline of the church, and most ardent in his love of holy poverty. St. Bernard would allow of no secular vanities in those who held benefices. "It is granted that you should live of the altar, but it does not follow that you are to luxuriate of the altar. Whatever you retain of the altar besides necessary food and simple raiment, is not yours; it is rapine, it is sacrilege."¶ His contemporary, Gilbert, bishop of London, gave all that he pos-

sessed to the poor, and lived in voluntary poverty. Peter, the venerable abbot of Cluny, would never suffer any other but a wooden cross to be presented to the dying. When the blessed Antouine, archbishop of Florence, died, all that was found in his palace consisted in some of the poorest furniture and a mule, and he was, therefore, buried at the public expense. The blessed Laurence Justinian, the first of the Venetian patriarchs, had only a family of five servants; his table was most frugal, and though constantly reading or writing, he had not even any books of his own. Thomas Cantipratensis shows that Maurice, archbishop of Rouen, prescribed to his steward, that out of an annual supply of 12,000 livres, he was to devote two or three thousand to the expenses of his family, and that the rest was for the poor.* He also mentions a certain Dominican, who became bishop of Bosnia, and when he had a yearly return of 8000 marcs, hardly expended any thing on himself or his family, not even keeping a horse, but only an ass, which used to carry his books and sacred furniture; he made his visitations on foot, accompanied with brethren of his order, giving great alms, and preaching by the way.† St. Bernard commemorates the simplicity of the blessed Malachy, archbishop of Armagh, who reserved nothing fixed for himself, no allowance for his table, not even a house, spending his whole time visiting different parts of his province, living by the work of his hands, and sleeping by night in the churches. He travelled on foot, a bishop and a legate. Not different in manner from St. Malachy, was St. Charles, archbishop of Milan. No one appeared in his house but clerks, or such at least as wore a clerical dress. No luxuries were on his table, no exquisite paintings in his hall, although they greatly delighted him; but the walls were naked and white. Cardinal Ximenes, archbishop of Toledo, would always travel on foot, or riding on an ass. No fine furniture, no golden or silver vessels appeared in his palace; and under the purple which became his office, he wore the habit of his order, and slept upon the poor bed which was prescribed by the rules of St. Francis. To him Wadding applies the description of Agrippa, saying that he was always nearer to rusticity than to delights.‡ Lastly, all the ancient canons relative to the simplicity and frugality

* Hom. IX.

† Duchesne, tom. II. p. 298.

‡ Surius, die 25 Febr.

|| Epist. CCXL.

§ Can. XVI.

¶ Epist. II.

* Lib. I. cap. 8.

† Lib. II. c. 57.

‡ Annal. Minorum, vols. XV. and XVI.

belonging to the sacerdotal manners, were confirmed by the council of Trent,* which pronounced "that they should hold out a model to all other men, of frugality, modesty, and continence; that the bishops should be content with modest furniture and with simple fare; and that nothing should ever appear in their houses or mode of life which was contrary to this holy institute, and which did not bespeak simplicity, the zeal for God, and a contempt for vanities."†

By the council of Agatha, as also by that of Epaone in 517, bishops, priests, and deacons, are forbidden, on pain of suspension, to keep dogs and birds for hunting. St. Boniface, archbishop of Mayence, prohibited the clergy from all hunting.‡ Similar prohibitions were made by various councils. § By the council of Trull, even the laity were forbidden to appear at public spectacles of dancing; and the councils of Spain were most severe upon them who assisted at the profane dances before the churches on the festivals of the saints. St. Ambrose says, "We find no just man in the number of hunters throughout the whole series of the Scriptures."|| The Pythagoreans did not allow themselves to hunt;¶ so that at least the ancient philosophy would approve of the ecclesiastical discipline in this respect, which might be irksome to mere solitary rustics.

By the council of Macon, in 585, bishops were forbidden to guard their houses with dogs, as being contrary to hospitality. The ancient canons equally prohibited the clergy from all games at dice or tables, or chess, which were also forbidden by the laws of Justinian, and by the apostolic canons, the prohibition, however, was extended equally to the laity.

St. Cæsareus, at Arles, had always a table prepared for guests and clergymen who travelled. "While he lived no one came to Arles as to a strange city, but as to his own house."** At these meals there was always a sacred lesson read aloud, according to universal usage in Episcopal houses, even when strangers were entertained. The

council of Toledo ordered that the Holy Scriptures should be read aloud at the table of bishops,* from whose houses the custom passed to the Court of Seculars, for not only Charlemagne when entertaining kings, and private noblemen at their feudal manors, but also the Greek emperors at Constantinople, had always something solemn from the holy fathers read aloud at table. St. Gregory of Tours, describes the monastery and hospice built by Domnolus, bishop of Mans. As the poor were often excluded from entering by the guards who kept watch upon the walls, he built the hospice without the walls, and placed there twenty monks and an abbot, whose duty it was to show hospitality to the poor.† Gregory the Great entertained all strangers who came to Rome;‡ and he gave attention to cause other bishops to exercise hospitality. When he invited Marianus, archbishop of Ravenna, to Rome, to consult the physicians, he advised him to appoint some person in his absence who should supply his place in entertaining guests at Ravenna. Pope Martin replied to certain imperial questions as to the reception that the patriarch Pyrrus would meet at Rome, "Do you not know the Roman church? Every wretched man that comes there is received to hospitality; all things needful are given to him. St. Peter rejects no one, sends away no one without gifts. The whitest bread and diverse kind of wines are given to him and to all who belong to him. If this be done to miserable persons, what expense would be spared on the reception of such an honourable guest as a bishop?"§ St. Benedict prescribed in his rule the constant practice of hospitality, especially to the poor and to strangers, because in them Christ is more immediately received.|| Isidore admits of no bounds to Episcopal hospitality, from the motive of those words of Christ, "Hospes fui et suscepistis me." A laic receiving one or two fulfils the duty of hospitality. A bishop, if he doth not receive all men is inhuman.¶ If all the faithful should desire to hear that sentence, *Hospes fui*, addressed to themselves, how much more the bishop whose hostel ought to be open to every one.

Hospitality became abused in some of the monasteries of Spain, so that the monks were forbidden by a council to receive any

* Sess. 22. cap. 10.

† Sess. 25. Thomassin. III. Lib. III. cap. 34. cap. 41.

‡ Epist. CV.

§ Concil. Epaonens. Can. 4; Concil. Liptinens. Can. 2; Concil. Suessionens. Can. 3; Concil. Trull. Can. 51. liber Pœnitent. Gregorii, P. III; Concil. Turonens, III. Can. 7; Concil. Gall. tom. II. p. 157.

|| Amb. in Psal. 118. Oct. 8. D. 86. c. 11.

¶ Jamblich. Cap. 28.

** Vita ejus, Lib. I. c. 31.

* Can. 7.

† Surius die 16 Maiæ.

‡ John. Diacon. Lib. II. c. 19.

§ Baron. an. 645.

|| Cap. 53. 56.

¶ De Offic. Eccles. Lib. II. cap. 5.

seculars excepting the poor, and those of such known virtue and religion, that there would be no interruption to the silence and sacred leisure of the cloister.* The councils and capitularies were also express in forbidding priests and monks to enter a tavern for the sake of eating or drinking.† The councils of Rheims and Francfort repeated this prohibition, but cases of necessity on a journey were always excepted. A certain bishop wished to make a distinction between dice and chess, at the latter of which he had played, but he recognised his error, and had for his penance to recite the Psalter three times, to wash the feet of twelve poor, and to give money to each of them. This was prescribed by Peter Damian. The councils even included chess in their prohibition.‡ Recreations that resembled an occupation, constant society, and incessant greetings, would have but ill agreed with the office of those who were charged to salute no man by the way, and who were forbidden to pass from house to house. The chief men in philosophy, according to the discipline of Pythagoras, were to know nothing of the Forum or of the courts of justice, or of the state councils, to keep aloof from political factions, and those concerned with the creation of magistrates, and not so much as to dream of suppers or other feasts.§ Cicero thinks that Erucius fully cleared Sexius Roscius from the charge of luxury, when he said that he was never even present at any banquet.|| These views harmonized with the ecclesiastical discipline. By the canons of the council of Lyons in the year 475, and by the council of Agde in 506, clerks were forbidden to appear at banquets: by the canons of Chrodogang, all assemblies of men, whether courts or tribunals, or feasts, or convivial meetings, are to be shunned by them as so many chains of pleasures. The company of seculars, and especially of the great, is to be avoided, say the English canons.¶ By the canons of the council of

Orleans, in the year 533, it was ordered that no priest should reside with seculars without the permission of his bishop. "The convivial meetings of seculars are to be avoided," says St. Jerome, writing to a priest, "and especially of those who are puffed up with honours."**

Hospitality, however, was of great moment in the institutions of clerical life. When bishops travelled they were entertained by other bishops: hence the complaints of St. Chrysostom to Pope Innocent concerning Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, because coming to Constantinople he had not descended at the bishop's house, where all things were ready to refresh him.† St. Augustin had always meat for his guests. Nazianzen says that Julian wished to inspire the heathens with this spirit of hospitality, but that the Gentile superstition refused to imitate it.‡ The Agapæ, however, were attended with such abuses that St. Ambrose and St. Augustin succeeded in abolishing them.§ Avitus, archbishop of Vienne, gave Maximian, a bishop, a letter of introduction to Cæsareus, archbishop of Arles, in which he says, "a priest can never be called a foreigner wherever the Catholic Church is found."||

Charlemagne used often to be entertained at bishops' houses, where he was always well received. It was understood that all persons of public office coming to his court, or returning from it, should be received in the bishops' palaces or in monasteries; but to meet this claim there was an express law in favour of the hosts. "Similarly also we decree that the manner of silence and of canonical quiet is to be observed so as to be disturbed by no exterior guest."¶ Wealth is exhausted by secular ostentation, not by Episcopal charity, so that while kings and nobles were well entertained, there were never wanting supplies for innumerable poor. This discipline of "gist" is hardly found out of France, where the royal majesty and the episcopacy were so closely united in sentiment and object.

In the time of Charlemagne it appears that the councils insisted upon four things to be observed in Episcopal hospitality—frugality in the fare, the presence of the poor, and of strangers travelling, and spi-

* Concil. Matisconens. Can. 5; Concil. Suesionens. Can. 3; Concil. Herdens. Can. 1; Concil. Gall. tom. II. p. 94. 152. 232; Capitular. Carol. Mag. Lib. I. c. 70. and Lib. VI. c. 285, 286; Lib. VII. c. 91, 92, 93. 103, 104; Concil. Mogunt. Can. 17.

† Concil. Gall. tom. II. p. 136. Capitular. Lib. I. c. 14.

‡ Concil. Biterrens. an. 1255.

§ Jamblich. Adhortat. ad Philosoph. cap. 14.

¶ Pro S. Roscio.

¶ Chrodogangi Regula Canonic. cap. 58. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. I.

* Epist. XXXIV. ad Nepotian.

† Socrat. Lib. VII. c. 4. 11. 13.

‡ Orat. I. in Jul.

§ Baron. an. 391.

¶ Epist. IX. Concil. Cæsaraugust. III. Can. 3.

¶ Thomass. III. Lib. I. cap. 39.

ritual reading.* There is the following law of Charles the Bald. "We wish that priests, who ought to show a good example to all men, may be hospitable. Let them also admonish their parishioners to be hospitable, and never to refuse a lodging to those who are travelling. And that all occasion of rapine may be taken away, let nothing be sold dearer to wayfarers than it was in the markets: but if they wish to sell dearer, let the travellers refer this to the priest, and let them sell according to his sentence, with humanity."† Wherever there was a parish priest there was a house to receive strangers and the poor, and a hospice for the purpose was always adjoining a cathedral church.‡ All this may still be verified by experience in other lands. From Engelberg, with one companion, I crossed the Storek Alp, and descended on a summer's evening into the Melch Thal which joins the vale of Sarnen. Klopel hath but a few houses and a church, but the curate remarked us from his window, and invited us into his house. As the rain had fallen in torrents during many hours, we had made bare our feet, and having a careless livery, that argued no great wealth in the possessors, that hospitality had all the merit of being offered to the poor. Never shall I forget the gracious benevolence of that good priest, and his holy simplicity; for when the bell tolled during supper, he invited us to repeat with him the angel's salutation. The council of Trent confirmed all the ancient canons enforcing the exercise of hospitality,§ and especially prescribing it to bishops, to be observed without respect of persons. It was the ancient rule that the poor were first to be received, and that the rich were not to be cast out. The hospitality of the church to the poor was for their relief, that to the rich was like a snare to entice them to be bountiful, that they might contribute to support the poor, and also that the sanctity of the cloister might produce a salutary impression upon the minds of the rich, and gradually win them from the world, so that seculars themselves might learn from frequenting these seminaries to love and practise the simplicity, the religious quiet, the piety and the heavenly conversation of holy men.

* Concil. Remens. II. Can. 7. 18; Concil. Turonens. III. Can. 5, 6; Concil. Paris. VI. Can. 14; Concil. Aquisgran. II. Can. 1. 3. Capitular. I. c. 75. + Capit. Carol. Calv. p. 471.

† Regula Crodogan. cap. 45; Concil. Aquisgran. 141. § Cap. 23.

S. Liudger used to invite both the poor and the rich to dinner, and during the banquet he used to supply them also with the sweet delights of spiritual food.

It must, however, have tried the zeal and charity of holy men, when to further their devout object, they were obliged to conform to popular customs, which were semi-barbarous. William of Malmesbury, in his life of Wolstan, bishop of Worcester, says that, "he was most abstemious at table, although in his hall, after the manner of the Saxons, men used to drink whole hours after dinner, while he sitting by would ruminate on the Psalms. Yet in his order he would pretend to drink; others poured out foaming cups; he holding his poor little vase would invite them to hilarity, satisfying more the custom of the country than the judgment of his own mind."* The house of S. Charles at Milan, was open to all the world. "There," says Giosso, "were poor people, and pilgrims, and strangers of distant nations, cardinals, bishops, prelates, vicars, and procurators, and sometimes he would give these guests horses and money to enable them to pursue their journey."† There are extant letters of St. Charles, relating how he received some English students on their way to Rome, and saying how he wished that in future all who passed would visit him, that he might entertain them while at Milan. Wilfred, a young Englishman, being on his pilgrimage to Rome came to Lyons, where he and all his companions were received by the Archbishop Dalphinus, who was so pleased with his gracious appearance and manners, that he proposed detaining him, offering him his niece in marriage, and the government of a great part of Gaul, and promising that he would be a father to him; but Wilfred replied, "I must fulfil my vows to God, which require that I should visit the apostolic seat, in order that I may learn the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, to the end that our nation may better serve God, and that I may be able to expect the reward promised to him who leaves father and mother that he may possess eternal life." On his return, however, he remained three years with the archbishop, learning many things from the learned doctors who surrounded him.‡

* Willielmi Malmesburiensis de Gestis Pontificum Anglorum, Lib. IV.

† Thomass. Pars III. Lib. III. cap. 47. 49.

‡ Mabillon Acta, S. Ordinis Benedict. Sæc. IV. Pars I. cap. 4.

Episcopal liberality in the middle ages was worthy of kings. Hear what says the historian who relates the coronation of Philip I. at Rheims in the year 1059, after describing the solemn ceremony: "All these things passed with the greatest devotion and the most lively joy. The Archbishop Gervais received all the assistants with kindness, and entertained them largely at his own expense, although he was not bound to receive any one unless the king himself; but he did it for the honour of his church and through generosity."*

We have already seen enough to be convinced that the indirect influence of the clergy during the middle ages must have been immense; it remains to examine the direct and specific channels by which the justice of those who were separate to the church was made to flow through the different members of the Christian state. These may be considered in twofold capacity, ordinary, universal, and what may be termed devotional, beyond what was of general obligation to meet particular occasions. Instances of the latter might easily be multiplied from the books not only of ecclesiastical, but also of civil history. St. Columban in the fifth century, was born in Ireland, in the Province of Leinster; he left his country to preach through Gaul, where he raised himself powerful enemies by boldly admonishing sinners. Fredegair says in his history, "In the fourteenth year of the reign of Theodoric, the reputation of St. Columban had spread through all the cities and provinces of Gaul and Germany. Being universally venerated, the king Theodoric used often to visit him at Luxeuil, in order humbly to beg the favour of his prayers. Having received him frequently in his monastery, the man of God began to question him, and to ask how he could deliver himself up to adultery with concubines, rather than enjoy the happiness of marriage." You see how the action of the clergy commences under the form of hospitality. Behold it now in the casual intercourse of life. It happened once that St. Valery, abbot of St. Valery in Picardy, who died in 622, when returning on foot from a place called Cayeux to his monastery, in the winter time, stopped to warm himself, on account of the extreme cold, in a house by the way side. The host and his companions, who ought to have received such a guest with

great respect, began on the contrary to speak with the judge of the place in a very light and improper manner. Faithful to his custom of always applying to corrupt and hideous wounds the salutary remedy of the Divine word, he endeavoured to correct them, saying, "My sons, have you not seen in the Gospel that in the day of judgment we shall have to render an account of every light word?" but they, despising his admonitions, abandoned themselves more and more to gross and immodest language, for the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart. Upon which he said, "I had wished, on account of the cold, to warm a little my fatigued body, but your guilty discourse obliges me to withdraw still frozen as I am," and so saying he went out of the house.* Let us take an instance from the Saxon chronicle. "Eadbald, king of Kent, renounced his baptism and lived in a heathen manner, so that he took to wife his father's widow. Then Laurentius, who was archbishop in Kent, resolved to depart southward over sea, and abandon every thing. But there came to him in the night the Apostle Peter, and severely chastised him, because he would so desert the flock of God. And he charged him to go to the king, and teach him the right belief. And he did so; and the king returned to the right belief."

S. Aldric, bishop of Sens, as he sat one day near the church of St. Stephen, saw pass a man named Marrymardus, whose countenance and gait gave evident indication of his mind's insolence. The prelate not daunted by his terrible looks, proceeded to admonish him, that if he had such authority over others he ought to show that he could govern also himself, and to remind him that he was but dust and ashes, and thus pouring in wine and oil into the wounds of this poor man, he succeeded at length in removing pride and vanity from his heart: insomuch that this haughty governor of the state submitted himself afterwards to the humble condition of a monk.†

When Philip I. was endeavouring to have his marriage with the virtuous Bertha declared null, through an adulterous passion for Bertrade, wife of the count of Anjou, and had even summoned the archbishop of Rheims, Ives de Chartres, and other pre-

* Collect. des Mém. relat. à l'Hist. de France, tom. VII. 92.

* Acta S. Ord. S. Bened. tom. II. 86.

† Mabillon, Acta S. Ord. Bened. Sæcul. IV. Pars I.

lutes, to assist at his marriage, he found in Ives an insuperable obstacle. This worthy successor of the apostles immediately wrote to him declaring that he would never consent to be present at such an act. "If a council were to be summoned," said he, "it might be examined whether you can lawfully be divorced according to the canons; but now, since I am absolutely called to Paris to assist at your marriage with one whom I know not whether she can be your wife, on account of my conscience, which I must preserve before God, and on account of my fame, which a good priest should maintain before those who are without, I would rather that a mill-stone were tied to my neck, and that I were cast into the sea, rather than by me the weakest of the weak should be offended."* At the same time he wrote to the archbishop of Rheims, to convince him that he could not in conscience make this marriage, and to the archbishop of Lyons, legate of the Pope, to inspire him with zeal to oppose such a scandalous outrage to justice and religion. These letters had full success, for these prelates fulfilled their duty admirably.†

But Ives de Chartres distinguished himself above them all by his courage in executing the orders of the Pope, and exhorting the king to penance; for which he was cast into prison; and when the people of Chartres were for delivering him by force, he appeased them, and declared that he would never return to his church by violence, and that he only sought their prayers for his deliverance. From his prison he wrote to the king a noble letter, concluding with saying, that he hoped, from the mercy of God, that his majesty would know one day that the wounds of those who love us, are better than the deceitful kisses of those who flatter us. In the council of Poitiers, the king was a second time excommunicated, notwithstanding the most violent opposition by the Duke of Aquitaine and a crowd of seculars, who attempted even to kill the legates, by mounting into the high galleries of the church, and thence casting down stones upon them when they saw them about to fulminate the sentence. One ecclesiastic, who stood at their side, was killed, and his blood sprinkled the altar, but the intrepid legates, to show how little they regarded the stones, which flew on all sides,

even took off their mitres and proceeded with the sentence, so that the fury of the seditious was in vain. The Count was obliged to make satisfaction, and the king and Bertrade incurred the penalty. In course of time, when Philip evinced real sorrow, and difficulties were needlessly thrown in the way of his being absolved, it was Ives de Chartres who came forward in his behalf in the council of Beaugency, rebuked those who were taking advantage of his distress, and seizing him by the hand, raised him from his knees, saying, let us depart, sire, I charge myself with your absolution; thus fulfilling what he had predicted to the king, that the wounds of a friend were better than the kiss of flatterers, for then had all men forsaken him. At length after solemnly promising to leave Bertrade for ever, the king barefooted, and with all the signs of a true penitent, coming before the Episcopal assembly, and begging pardon of the church for the scandal he had given, was absolved along with Bertrade by the legate.

St. Raymond, of Pennafert, born of that illustrious house in Catalonia, in the year 1175, which is allied to the kings of Arragon, had entered the order of St. Dominick, and had been called to the court of James II. king of Arragon. Finding that the king would not attend to the advice which he gave him in the affairs of his conscience, he left the court. This noble firmness, which God approved by a striking miracle, brought the king to himself, and caused his return to the way of justice.

Pope Clement VI. than whom, as Petrarch says, no one could ever have better merited the name, ordered Casimir, King of Poland, to send back his mistress, and to be faithful to his wife. This prince at first refused, but at length submitted, and underwent the penance imposed upon him. When king Richard was setting a bad example to the army of Paladins during their stay in Sicily, a holy man, Joachim, came forth from the grottoes of Calabria to remind the pilgrims of their solemn duty, and to restrain the scandal of their lives.*

St. Antony of Padua, heard that the tyrant Eccelinus had lately put a number of men to death at Verona. Immediately he went to him, and entering his presence said, "There is hanging over thee, thou fell tyrant, the horrible doom of Almighty God. How long wilt thou persist in shed-

* Ivoius Carnot. Epist. XV.

† Hist. de Suger, Lib. I.

* Brompton Chronic. an. 1191.

ding innocent blood?" All persons present expected nothing else but that Eccelinus would order his immediate execution. The event, however, was not so; for like a lamb he humbled himself before the man of God, prostrated himself on the ground, confessed aloud his iniquities, and promised amendment. In fact, during the rest of his life, he refrained from many crimes which he had before been in the habit of committing.* Ere we come to the end of our course, we shall see what were the sufferings of the clergy in consequence of their zeal in this respect; nevertheless, we may admire here the beauty of these instances, where the proud bold baron, or the mighty ruler of the earth, is seen to hold their temper in such high respect, and curb himself even of his natural scope, when they did cross his humour. Unlike the hero of Corioli, the warrior who would have scorned the force of domestic affections, and remained inflexible before the tears of suppliant women, became gentle when confronted with the plain heroic greatness of the Catholic priest, the humble minister of the spiritual society whose power is still hidden here below.

Glaber Radulphus, a monk of Cluni, who wrote in the reign of king Robert, relates that a count of Anjou built a church near Tours, in honour of the celestial hierarchy. As he had oppressed his people with many injuries, he thought by building this church to reconcile himself to God. But when he asked the bishop of Tours to dedicate it, that prelate refused to do so, until the count had restored to the poor people all that he had tyrannically extorted from them. Of the zeal and ingenious charity of the clergy in converting men to justice, history can furnish endless details.

Bourdoise, a missionary priest in the reign of Louis XIII., on one occasion being unable in the morning to gain the attention of certain villagers, went in the evening, and finding them playing at bowls, played with them, and having persuaded the peasant who was on his side, he made use of him to persuade the others, and so succeeded in making them all listen to him, and thus furnished them with spiritual succour.† St. Francis Xavier used to visit persons of the most abandoned manners, pretending to know nothing of their course of life, and by degrees introducing subjects of piety till he converted them.‡ When sailing from Co-

chin to Cambaya there was in the ship a Portuguese gentleman who made a boast of his impiety. The saint immediately marked him out for his companion, and endeavoured to please him by agreeable conversation, but whenever he uttered a word about salvation, the other would not hear him. Xavier was not to be discouraged: he continued to treat him with kindness. On landing at Camanor they two went alone to walk in a wood of palm trees, and there the saint took occasion to display the fervour of his charity, for after giving himself the discipline and then making a prayer to Jesus Christ, the gentleman was so astonished and moved, that he threw himself at his feet and made his confession in the very grove, and ever after lived like a good Christian.

There was a Portuguese gentleman at Meliapor who led a scandalous life, keeping a house like a seraglio. St. Francis Xavier came self-invited, and prepared to dine with him: he spoke on common subjects, and finally went away without saying a word respecting his course of life. The gentleman believed that this silence of the saint boded him no good, and that he had nothing further to expect but a disastrous death and an eternal ruin. With this thought he hastened to visit him: "O my father," said he, "how your silence has spoken to my heart! I have not had a moment's repose since you left my house! O, if my ruin be not absolutely determined, behold me at your feet, and do with me what you may judge best for my soul: I will obey you implicitly." The saint embraced him, and after reminding him that the mercy of God was infinite, disposed him to a general confession, which was followed by his total conversion to a holy life. Three famous robbers on Mont Casal, were converted by the humility and charity of St. Francis of Assisium. The holy man began by sending them bread and wine, and messages, entreating their forgiveness, because the father, guardian of one convent, had closed the doors against them in his absence.* On journeys St. Francis and his companions always with salutary and simple words exhorted every one they met to the love of God and to penance for sins. The Catholic priest might boldly admonish men when clearly it was nothing but the sincerest love which induced him to administer correction. "Nor ought it to seem too laborious to doctors," says St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, "to pour out

* Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, an. 1231.

† Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. VII. 66.

‡ Bouhours, *Vie D. S. F. X.* 16.

* *Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs*, Lib. I. c. 86.

tears for the conversion of sinners, when He that was made man, and created all things, poured out his blood for our sins upon the cross."* Moreover, the success of the clergy on such occasions must have been greatly facilitated in consequence of their generous and heroic character, which could not but incline men to listen to their admonitions; for it did not escape observation, that in the worst of times, all the sweet and noble virtues of humanity, enriched with the unction of grace, were sure to be displayed to the consolation of wretched men, by ecclesiastics. Poets remarked that some clergyman of holy reverence was always found constant to a fallen king, and what shall we say of their constancy in friendship? The famous John of Salisbury followed St. Thomas into exile at the risk of his life. When the beautiful and virtuous Adelaide, daughter of Ridolphus, king of Burgundy, and widow of Lothaire, king of Italy, had refused to unite herself to the son of Berenger, who had caused the ruin of her husband, and perhaps his death, she was plundered of all her riches, and shut up by the Berengers in a fort, on the lake of Garda, where Willa, the wife of Berenger, went so far as to ill-treat her even with blows, as is related by the nun Rosvida, a poetess of that age, as also by Odo, abbot of Cluny. After remaining there with a female servant, for a considerable time, it was a priest named Martin who succeeded in releasing them, by making an aperture in the wall, and a subterranean mine. The illustrious captives and their brave deliverer hid themselves in a wood near the lake of Garda, where if it had not been for the succour of a fisherman, they would probably have perished with hunger. She was subsequently admitted by Azzo into the strong fortress of Carossa, which Berenger besieged, with the hope of recovering her person; but the castle was impregnable. Otho, coming from Germany, set her at liberty, and admiring her virtue and beauty, made her his wife. Essentially indeed the clerical was an heroic character. If, by the canon law, persons who evinced a disposition contrary to ecclesiastical mildness, were irregular, and could not be ordained,† on the other hand, by the sacred canons, all clerks were to be deposed who were known to be inclined to flattery. The words of St. Athanasius to the Abbot Dracontius,

were strictly an ecclesiastical axiom, *οὐ πρέπει τῷ καιρῷ δουλεῖν, ἀλλὰ τῷ Κυρίῳ*. Men of chivalrous generosity could not but love a priesthood the members of which were even distinguished by the most lofty and delicate sense of honour. Gilles de Rome, styled the blessed doctor, prior of the Augustinian hermits, and hearer of St. Thomas of Aquin, in the schools of Paris, though of the Colonna family, the preceptor of Philip-le-Bel, for whose use he composed his book on the government of princes, nevertheless wrote in defence of Pope Boniface VIII., after the outrage committed against him by his relation, under the auspices of his royal patron, who for this noble act would never forgive him, or suffer him to become a member of the sacred college.* Henry IV., before besieging Rouen, took possession of Louviers by means of a priest named Jean de la Tour, who betrayed the gates to him. A prebendal stall in the cathedral of Evreux, was his recompense from the king; but the clergy of Evreux, not being able to endure the presence of this man, dispensed him from residence. As, notwithstanding this privilege, he used to come every year to assist at the office of the holy week, and of Easter, the canons conspired together, and agreed to absent themselves towards the end of the psalm which precedes the Benedictus at Lauds, in order that the chorist might bear to him the anthem, *Traditur autem*, which is sung at this canticle. The traitor was thus surprised, and forced to sing his own condemnation, and the complaint which he made afterwards only turned to his greater confusion.† During the middle ages, fidelity in the accomplishment of all the sacerdotal duties ensured to the clergy an immense influence, and gave them a prodigious moral power. Truly an archbishop of Canterbury might boldly defend the rights of his church, when, like St. Thomas, he had been accustomed to sit at supper surrounded with all the poor of the city: an archbishop of Canterbury, of whom Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remy, could say, that "he naked was following Christ hanging naked on the cross, and imitating the vestiges of the ancient saints, might, without any misgivings, oppose himself as a wall for the house of Israel."‡ Pascasius Radbert, describing the Abbot Wala, asks, "but how could such a humble man, and one so dead

* S. Odonis Collat. Lib. III. Bibliothec. Cluniacensis.

† Joan. Devot. Instit. Can. Lib. I. tit. VII. 1.

* Bulæus, Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. III.

† Hist. d'Evreux, 360.

‡ Petri Cellens. Epist. Lib. I. 10.

to the world, be found speaking with such boldness before senators and emperors? He it was whom neither the terror of threats, nor the force of kings, nor the hope of what is present, nor the fear of what is future, nor the promise of advantages, nor the fear of any kind of punishment, nor any authority, could ever recall from the charity of Christ, from the love of his country and of his people, from the love of the churches, and from the faith which he owed to the emperor. Therefore, like another Jeremiah, he constantly spoke such things, lifting his voice against the crimes and abuses of the palace.* Such men were not likely to prove timid friends to truth, osiers that could never make beams to bear stress in the church. They were men ready to make any sacrifice, and who very often had, at an early period of their course sacrificed all the human and earthly ties that could have withheld them from performing their divine duty. When the emperor Constance required pope Liberius at Milan to subscribe the condemnation of St. Athanasius, on pain of exile, the pontiff replied, "I have already bid adieu to my brethren who are at Rome; the laws of the Church are dearer to me than a residence in this city." They sought nothing personal from kings. St. Hilary of Poitiers wrote to the emperor Constance in these terms. "You bow your head to receive the benediction of the bishops, and you trample under foot their faith."

We come, in fine, to consider the direct and ordinary method of extending the influence of ecclesiastical justice to all members of the body of Christ, which was by evangelizing the nations, and announcing to every creature the word of life.

The history of the preachers and apostles of the Christian religion, during the middle ages, is even, in a poetical, and philosophic point of view, a rich mine, of the existence or extent of which but few modern readers seem at all aware. I can but indicate it, and as it were point out the spot, but without attempting to explore it. What a life, from infancy to martyrdom, was that of St. Adalbert, bishop of Prague, the first apostle of Prussia, in the tenth century, son of Count Slawnik, in Bohemia, and closely related to the sovereigns of Bohemia and of Germany, as given by Canisius and others! The pages

of the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, or the acts of the saints of the order of St. Benedict, which at one time embraced nearly the whole church, or the annals of the Camaldolese, which relate the preaching and martyrdom of these servants of God, cannot be read without experiencing the same impressions as are produced by hearing the first victories of Christ's messengers. The apostle of Livonia was Meinhard, an Augustinian monk of the monastery of Sigeberg, in Holstein. Already an aged man, he renounced the peace of his cloister for the devout and perilous enterprise of converting that heathen people from whom he had nothing to expect but martyrdom. Independent of all other evidence, a true miracle, a palpable interposition of a supernatural hand, must be recognised in the zeal and perseverance with which these monks of the tenth and eleventh centuries offered themselves to death for the Gospel in all the northern lands of Germany, the inhabitants of which, on account of their ferocity and impure superstition, are styled by Bishop Christian, in his Chronicle, "the children of Belial." Christian, the Cistercian monk, who brought the heavenly light to so many people of the north, came out of the beautiful cloister Oliva, near Danzig, in Pomerania, which was one of the first foundations there on its conversion to Christianity. Among the holy missionaries along with Albert the bishop, went one who had formerly won renown in arms, as a noble knight in the host of Henry the Lion. This was Bernard de Lippa, in Westphalia, who was now a Cistercian monk.* In the year 1225, William, a bishop and legate of the pope, came into that part of Prussia which is beyond Poland and Pomerania, "where," says the monk Alberic, "not by strength, but by wisdom and genius, he converted many of the Pagans, whose language he in a great measure learned. It was for this end that with great labour he translated into that barbarous tongue, Donatus, the same "who deigned to put his hand to the first art," as St. Bonaventura says, on pointing him out to Dante, in Paradise. William of Modena visited Livonia also as legate, admonishing the Teutonic knights to govern the newly converted under the soft yoke of the faith with mildness, not to oppress them, by exacting tithes, or laying any other burthen on them, but in the meek spirit of Christianity to make happy the

* Mabillon, *Sæcul. IV. pars I. Acta S. Ord. Bened.*

* *Chronic. Montis Sereni.*

newly planted churches.* In the eleventh century, Werner, Bishop of Merseburg, who, in his age, like a heavenly star illuminated the whole church, a man of excellent merit in God, and a most vigilant executor of his duty, was inflamed with holy zeal to convert the Pagans. Though ignorant of the Slavonic language, he was most anxious to impart the Christian faith to that people, and he caused some books to be made in that language with a Latin translation; so that what he did not understand himself he enabled others to understand.† In their apostolic labours, these holy missionaries seemed to place all their trust in the efficacy of just men's prayers. St. Boniface, while among the wild Saxons, addresses an epistle to all the most reverend bishops, venerable priests, white-robed deacons, canons and clerks, to the mitred abbots, and humble abbesses, and the monks subject to them, to the devout virgins consecrated to God, and to all the handmaidens of Christ, and generally to all the Catholics fearing God, of the race and land of the English, imploring them to remember him in their prayers, that our God and Lord Jesus Christ, who wishes all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of God, may convert the hearts of the Pagans to the Catholic faith.‡ The fame of St. Boniface's sanctity drew crowds of holy men into Germany from Britain, some to discharge the office of readers, others of writers, and others to exercise various arts, many of whom lived in subjection to him in his regular community, while others dispersing themselves, preached the word of God through the whole region of the Hessians and Thuringians.§ These were the conquerors whom our ancestors deemed deserving of their highest honours. St. Cuthbert writes to the bishop Lullus, expressing the joy which England derives from having been deemed worthy to give birth to St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, who by his preaching and example, had converted such a multitude of Pagans to God; and he relates, that in a general synod in England, it had been resolved to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom, and to choose him, along with the blessed Gregory and Augustin, as patrons of the English.|| The life of Valentine, the apostle of Passau, who had

come from Britain or Ireland, was found in the year 1120, inscribed in ancient characters upon a leaden tablet inclosed within his tomb, in that church. It began thus, "Venit ab oceano vir humilis Valentinus nomine, in civitatem Petaviam predicandi gratia." This tablet was probably placed in his grave in the year 768, when the body of the saint was translated from Trent to Passau.* An epitaph in the cathedral of Salzburg, by an ancient poet, supposed to be Alcuin, attests the coming of Virgilius from Ireland, for the sake of preaching to that people—

"Quæ cernis veniens, O lector, inclyta tecta,
Virgilius fecit, Domini deductus amore:
Egregius Præsul meritis et moribus almus:
Protulit in lucem quem mater Hibernia primum.
Sed peregrina petens Christi jam propter amorem,
Delicias mundi, et patriam contempsit amatam;
Per mare, per terras, partes pervenit in istas
Multiplicare studens tota virtute talentum
Doctrinæ, populis et spargere semina vitæ."†

The annals which record the preaching of the Franciscans, and Dominicans, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when they sent missionaries to the Tartars, to the Armenians, and to the Sarrassins of Africa, and Palestine, and Babylon, as well as to the Lithuanians, and other nations of the north, many of whom received the crown of martyrdom while preaching, as also their missions to the West Indies, in the two succeeding ages, prove how interminable is this wondrous and sublime history. The blessed Odericus, a Franciscan out of Italy, travelled over nearly the whole world, winning souls to Christ. Persians, Medes, Armenians, Indians, Scythians, and Tartars, heard him announce the Gospel.‡

John de Monte Corvino, a minor friar, sent to the East by Pope Nicholas IV. in the year 1289, writes as follows: "I, brother John, departed from Thaurisus, a city of Persia, in the year 1291, and entered India. At the church of St. Thomas the Apostle, I remained thirteen months, and baptized an hundred persons in various places. Brother Nicholas de Pistoria, of the order of the preachers, was my companion; he died there, and was buried in that church. Thence proceeding alone, I came to Katag, the kingdom of the Tartars, and presented to the great Cham, letters from our lord the

* Voigt Geschichte Preussens. II. 315.

† Winnigstadii Chron. Halberst.

‡ S. Bonif. Epist. VI.

§ S. Willibaldus Vit. S. Bonif.

|| Id. Epist. LXX.

* Germania Sacra, tom. I.

† Ger. Sacra, tom. II. 95.

‡ Wadding, Ann. Minor. tom. VII.

Pope, inviting him to embrace the true faith ; but he is to inveterate in idolatry ; though he conferred great benefits on the Christians, and I stayed with him during two years. Through the malicious misrepresentation of the Nestorian heretics, I was often dragged to judgment, in peril of death, till God revealed my innocence to the emperor. I remained solitary during eleven years, till brother John Arnold, of Cologne, came to me. I built one Church in the city of Cambaliech, which is the royal residence, and finished it in six years. I made a tower and placed in it three bells. There I baptized about six thousand persons. I also purchased successively, a hundred and fifty boys, sons of Pagans, of the age of seven to eleven, who, as yet, knew no law, and I baptized them, and taught them Latin and Greek ; and I wrote out thirty Psalters for them, with hymns, and two breviaries, with which eleven of these boys already know our office, and keep choir as in convents, whether I am present or not ; and many of them write out other books ; and the lord emperor delights much in their song. I toll the bells at the regular hours, and with this convent of children and babes, do I celebrate the divine office. I think if I had had two or three assistants, perhaps I should at length baptize the emperor. Therefore I entreat that some brethren may be sent out. Twelve years have now passed since I received any news from Rome, or from our order in the west. I want an Antiphonarium, and Lives of the Saints, a Gradual, and a Psalter, noted ; for I have only portable books, and if I had one copy, my boys could write out others. I am about building another church, and dispersing them through the country. I am now old and grey headed, yet rather through labours and tribulation than age, for I am in my fifty-eighth year. I have learned the language of the Tartars, and translated into that tongue the whole New Testament, and the Psalter ; and I have written them out in their most beautiful letters ; and I write, and read, and preach openly, in testimony of the law of Christ.* This letter was written in the year 1305.* Five years later, that emperor, his mother, and brother, were converted by the same friar John, who was now archbishop with three suffragans. The emperor desired to assume the name of John at his baptism ; and shortly after died, and was buried in the convent.

* Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. VI.

It was in 1517, the year in which Martin Luther began to disseminate his doctrines, that Martin of Valentia, the apostle of America, began to preach in Spain ; who afterwards compensated in the remotest regions of India, the loss which the Christian Church suffered in the north. His letter in 1531, and that of Peter of Ghent, to his brother friars, in Belgium, in which he describes the manner of the Mexicans, and the preaching and establishments of the Franciscans, amongst them, are most valuable and interesting fragments of history.* This Martin died in the arms of a minor, uttering the words. " Brother, my desire has been frustrated ;" in which he alluded to his desire of martyrdom.

But it was not alone in converting infidel nations, that the zeal of the clergy, during the middle ages, was most remarkably exercised. The less eminent, though equally important office of instruction and admonition, in countries already subject to the Church, opened a field of action, on which we find them indefatigably employed. The spiritual interests of every people, were alike dear to the ambassadors of Christ. In the fifth century, France, directed by Pope Celestine I. sent her St. Germain of Auxerre, and St. Lupus, into England ; and these apostolic men preached not only in the churches, but also in the open air. Soon afterwards, the school of Iltut, their disciple, in Glamorganshire, gave Samson and St. Magloire to the see of Dol, in Brittany, and Maclou to that of St. Malos.

Bishops residing almost always in their cathedral city, preached often in the week, and sometimes every day. By authoritative promulgations, they procured obedience to the ecclesiastical discipline ; as when the canons of Ravenna denied entrance to the Church, during one month, to any layman who was heard uttering a blasphemous word, and the sacraments at death, if he had persisted.

Missionaries, who were generally monks, traversed the country, and preached in the churches, or in the open places, in the midst of the people. By the canons of the council of Arles, in the year 813, bishops are enjoined to be careful in instructing the clergy and the people, in the mysteries of the faith ; and the priests are required to preach not only in the towns, but in all the parishes. The council of Mayence, in 813, enjoins the clergy to teach the people the necessary prayers in the vulgar tongue ;

* Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. XVI.

and the council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 836, reminds all priests that they must teach the people how they ought to live and die. Thus we read of St. Richarius: "Such was his fervour to collect souls to Christ, that not confined to his monastery, he visited the churches, camps, and villages, and each of the houses of the faithful, to excite the hearts of his hearers, to the love of the celestial country."* The fame of this holy man's sanctity spreading far and wide, king Dagobert came, with all his train, to visit him in order to commend himself to his prayers. The servant of God strengthened him with his blessing, and corrected him with the free voice of sacerdotal authority, warning him not to become proud with power, nor to trust in uncertain riches, not to be lifted up by the vain sound of applause, nor to take pleasure in perishable honours, but rather to fear the power of God, and to praise his immense glory, to esteem all human power and renown, as nothing which passes away like a shadow and vanishes, like the foam upon water, before the least wind; he reminded him that where more is given, more is required; and he asked, how could he who would hardly be able to answer for himself, in the day of judgment, endure to give an account for so many thousands of people committed to him? He said, that every one ought to fear more to be in pre-eminent station, than in one of subjection. This correction, the king, as he was wise, received benignly; and taking pleasure in the free boldness of truth, he asked the priest of Christ, to come to his banquet: who being guided by the example of Christ, not disdaining the feast of seculars, came to the table of the king in order that he might find an occasion of preaching; and during that whole day and night, he administered the words of God to the guests, amidst the joys of the feast. The king, from this hour, began to love him, and to show him great honour; and he bestowed a territory upon him, which became the foundation of this monastery.†

Even on journeys we find provision made for hearing the preacher. King Robert, before setting out on his pilgrimage to Rome sent to inquire for men; especially imbued with the duties of the Divine service; and the venerable Angelrann, of the monastery of St. Richarius, is proclaimed by all to be most expert; so that the king took him

along with him. During the journey, the hidden riches of this man were made to appear; for he preached and instilled the word into the hearts of his companions. The king admired his conversation, was delighted with the spotless chastity of his life, was amazed at the eloquence of his tongue, and filled with reverence for the purity of his soul. It is said, that throughout the whole way in which he militated in the divine service, for God and the king he never wanted to be refreshed by the consolation of books; "which whether or not it could be," says this ancient writer, "let the learned judge, but the studious examine."*

In their zeal to announce to the people what they had received, we find the clergy dauntless, under the most discouraging circumstances, as if ever mindful of the injunction which God gave through his prophet; "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of scorpions; but speak to them, for perchance they will hear."†

One need only read the letter of Pope Alexander III. to the archbishop of Upsal, and his suffragans, to form some idea of the evils, in barbarous lands, which were combated by the holy see.

Truly admirable does their zeal appear in this respect, when contrasted with the spirit of all former teachers, who had appeared amongst mankind. Not even Pythagoras would impart his wisdom to every one. Lysis rebuked Hipparchus for speaking of it to the vulgar, and said, that it was unjust and impious to reveal to common men, the things which were acquired with such pains and labour. There was the distinction of those within or without the veil; for such was the pride of these teachers, that they made it a mark of great honour, and proficiency, to be admitted within the veil to behold them; and Pythagoras used to sit with a curtain between him and his hearers, till he had proved them, and judged them worthy to see his face.‡ How would such teachers have been lost in amazement, on witnessing the humility and condescension of the Catholic philosophers, in communicating their mysteries to the human race! If they could have heard a Bernardine of Sienna, teaching the duties of his order, and saying, "Doceant aperte qui susceperunt occulte: doceant humane qui susceperunt divine: doceant libenter qui susceperunt silenter: doceant gaudenter qui acceperunt gratanter?"§

* Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Richarii apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. IV.

† Chronic. Centulensis sive Richarii, Lib. I. cap. 18.

* Lib. IV. cap. 2.

† Ezek. ii.

‡ Jamblich. de Pythagoric. Vita, cap. 17.

§ S. Ber. Senens. tom. III. § IV.

St. Jerome *Æmilian*, that noble Venetian, the founder of orphan schools, is recorded to have literally made himself all things to all men, to save them. Mixed in the crowd of rustic labourers, assisting them to reap the corn, and to gather in the harvest, he used to explain to them the mysteries of the faith; binding up the wounds of poor little boys, he used to administer spiritual remedies, while he seemed intent only on taking care of their bodies.

The blessed friar, Lewis of Barga, in the fifteenth century, used to walk through the fields, and hold the plough for the rustics, that he might discourse to them on God, and persuade them to repair to confession.*

I think no one will question any longer the warmth of zeal which was evinced by the clergy of the middle ages, in seeking to convert men; but it will be asked, to what did they really convert them? For the statements of modern writers, respecting the ecclesiastical influence, however unjust and monstrous, render some observations, in reply to this question, indispensable. Lorenzo Pignotti, in his history of Tuscany, which I profess not to understand, seems inclined to maintain, that the clergy advocated every abuse, and inculcated every superstition. The assertions, indeed, of a writer, to whom Gibbon and Robertson are always original sources of infallible purity, in whose judgment Locke is the greatest of philosophers, and language the noblest of human inventions, ought not to be rashly interpreted, lest one should treat him with injustice; but there is a multitude of writers at present who, undoubtedly, entertain such views. Four years have not passed since a splendid edition appeared at Edinburgh, of a work which contained the following sentence, among many others similar. "The clergy in the middle ages, were lords of the people's consciences; and in this capacity employed their influence nearly always to the detriment of the clear and direct authority of honest virtue." You smile, reader, and accuse me of disrespect, for presenting you with such passages; but remember, these are taken from popular works, and, perhaps, in some countries, those who have converted literature into a trade, have made the discovery, that no works can be popular, which are not enriched with such passages. They occur,

* Ann. Min. tom. XIV.

too, in works of a far higher order. "The monastic apostles of Livonia," says Voigt, "brought that heathen people the Christianity of the middle ages; the religion of monks into which they were to be initiated by a little sprinkling of water. No wonder, therefore, that those heathens should suppose, as they said, that by bathing in a river, they could wash out that poor faith, and obliterate it." Now truly, reader, my burden is great, that Voigt's name is laid upon me, whom, I must confess, of all modern historians of his sect, seems worthy of most admiration, since of all such he is the most Catholic; yet if he will defile the fountains, out of which his flowing streams have proceeded, let us boldly examine with what reason he did it. To neglect at first more positive testimony, how, on such a supposition, can he explain the prodigious change in the material order of society, which followed the preaching of the men of God, who evangelized the nations of Germany? Has he forgotten those great voices which were heard over the tops of the mountains, in the silence of the night, as if of mourners calling to each other, and lamenting the broken idols which, amidst the acclamations of the converted multitude, had been thrown in the lake of Constance, after the sermon of St. Gall?*

Walafrid Strabo says, "that St. Gall remained some time with Theodebert, king of Austrasia, opening the sacred Scriptures to him, and insinuating truth."† These monastic apostles of Livonia brought with them, as an old writer says, the grace of conversation, the temperance of sobriety, the modesty of patience, the virtue of abstinence, the constancy of preaching, the sweetness of affability;‡ and, undoubtedly, the initiatory sacrament of baptism; that this was part of the Christianity of the middle ages, one is most ready to admit; but can this be adduced in evidence, to prove that the clergy of that epoch, neglected to insist upon the exercise of justice, and the observance of the laws of the Gospel? The reader who has condescended to follow me through the former volumes of this work, must feel already convinced how utterly unfounded are all such representations; but as the investigation cannot fail to bring to light fresh beauties, which lie too often buried or

* Walafrid Strab. de Vit. S. Gall. cap. 6.

† Id. cap. 3.

‡ Arnold. Lubec. I. c.

forgotten in the pages of our ancient books, I fearlessly invite him to accompany me on this quest, with a view to ascertain not what was the object of preachers, which would imply in ourselves a most unjustifiable and even ridiculous doubt; but what were the peculiar characteristics belonging to the instruction of the clergy during the middle ages.

Pope St. Gregory says, "that in order to teach his people, the Lord at no time ceased to send labourers into his vine-yard; for formerly, by the fathers, afterwards by doctors of the law, and prophets, and lastly, by the apostles, he laboured as if with husbandmen, to till and cultivate it."* If you ask, with what effect? the question becomes wholly different. Our Lord, in three years, made but few disciples; the first missionaries are said to have only converted seven persons in all Spain. St. Bernard, accordingly, says to Pope Eugene; "You are not obliged to cure, but to spare nothing in order to cure." "I have laboured more than them all," said St. Paul; he did not say, "I have gained more fruit. Do thou thy duty without anxiety, and without disturbance, and God will do what is right."

It was a celebrated question with the ancient philosophers, whether virtue could be communicated by instruction. Socrates denied that it could be taught; being not the gift of nature, but the effect of a certain inspiration from heaven.† Theages, Protagoras, Crito, and Simo, wrote books in the same sense;‡ which opinion Cicero follows.§ The Stoics, on the contrary, held with Chrysippus, Cleanthes, and Posidonius, that virtue might be imparted by teaching. The verses of Hesiod were famous; "He is best of all who of himself understands all things; and he is good who consents to him who speaks well; but he who neither of himself knows what is right, nor consents to hear another who announces it, is, indeed, an useless man."|| Under the latter supposition, however, the practical results were not so easily obtained. "The Athenians," as Socrates observes, "were not worse when Pericles first began to harangue them, than they were afterwards, when he pronounced before them his last oration."¶ It is true, the question could hardly be

tried fairly, when the teachers of justice were themselves among the unjust. The honest fisherman in Plautus describes most of them in those times, when replying to the fine discourse of Dæmones:

"Spectavi ego pridem comicos ad istum modum
Sapienter dicta dicere, atque iis plaudier,
Cum illos sapientis mores monstrabant populo;
Sed cum inde suam quisque ibant divorsi domum,
Nullus erat illo pacto, ut illi jussissent."*

We have already seen what was the justice of the clergy as far as regards themselves. Robertson prefaces his praise of the Catholic missionaries in America, by saying that they were weak and ignorant, but pious men; on which Manzoni remarks, "What is this religion in which weak men when they are pious resist force in favour of their fellow men, and in which the ignorant are able to refute the sophisms which the passions oppose to justice? What is this religion, one may indeed demand, which enables its weak ministers to rise above all the intellectual summits of their age, and to transmit to all posterity monuments of their eminent and heroic justice?"

Guizot, after describing the duties and the oaths prescribed to knighthood, as given by St. Palaye and La Colombière remarks, "Certainly in this series of oaths, and in the obligations imposed by chivalry, there is a moral development quite foreign from the lay society of this epoch. Moral notions so elevated, often so delicate, so scrupulous, above all so humane, and always stamped with the religious character, emanated evidently from the clergy. The clergy alone in these times thought of the duties and relations of men; their influence was constantly employed in directing the ideas and customs of chivalry to the accomplishment of these duties, and to the amelioration of these relations. Chivalry was not instituted, as I have shown, with this design, for the protection of the weak, the re-establishment of justice, and the reformation of manners: it arose simply without design, as a natural consequence of the Germanic traditions and feudal relations; but the clergy soon took possession of it, and made it an instrument to establish peace in society, and a more enlarged and rigorous morality in private conduct, or, in short, to further the general work which they pursued. The canons of the councils, from the

* Hom. XIX.

† *Æschinis Socratici Dialog. I. de virtute. Plato Meno Enthydemus.*

‡ *Laert. II. 121.*

§ *De Nat. Deorum, II. 66.*

|| *Op. at Dies.*

¶ *Plato Georgias.*

* *Rudens, IV. 7.*

eleventh to the fourteenth century, will show the clergy thus employed in making chivalry, subservient to the same result."*

But now, leaving these modern writers to adjust their differences of opinion, let us proceed to the original sources of information, and observe what is the evidence of history respecting the preaching of the clergy during the middle ages; for it is clear that their instructions are as much matter of history as the orations of Pericles or the apology of Plato.

It is a singular circumstance that the discourses from which Maclean and Robertson, and after them a whole host of historic writers, conclude that the clergy during the middle ages, taught men to suppose that the Christian religion imposed no other duty but that of paying tithes, should be precisely those of an eminent servant of God, which have been transmitted to us in great detail by another saint, who wrote the history of his life, a considerable part of which is occupied with recording how he used to preach to the people; a work which is assuredly one of the most interesting literary monuments of that period which the Church possesses.

With the early life of St. Eloy, we were made acquainted in a former book. It was then understood at parting, that we should again meet with him, and in the cloisters of Noyon. The moment is arrived to have those hopes verified. The second part of that history presents to us the ecclesiastical life of Eligius, and relates how at a council held to take measures against heresy and to correct the customs of ordination, Eligius was elected bishop of the church of Noyon, while at the same time Ouen was chosen to preside over that of Rouen. The holy man insisted upon first discharging the clerical functions of a lower rank for a time. At length both were consecrated on the same day, in the church of Rouen. His life was now distinguished by the same humility and good works. His pastoral efforts were successful in reclaiming many barbarous people from idolatry, which still had root among savage parts bordering on the sea. He held a middle place between the rich and the poor, so that the poor looked up to him as to a father, and the rich as to a superior, for he did not pay regard to the power of the person, but rather to the excellence of manners; and he honoured each man in proportion to the sanctity of his life. He thought it a

personal loss if any poor person were relieved by any one else but himself, for he believed that he relieved Christ in the poor. Every day he taught the people committed to his charge, assembling them in the church, and speaking with the boldness of a prophet. "I beseech you, dearest brethren," he used to say, "and admonish you with great humility, that you would hear me with attention, while I remind you of what is necessary for your salvation. Consider that I am bound to excite you without ceasing to remember the tremendous judgment of God, and to desire the heavenly recompense, in order that with you I may deserve to rejoice in the perpetual peace of angels. Remember what a covenant you have made in baptism, and what are the articles of your faith, that your being called Christians, may not serve to your condemnation but to your remedy, for to that end you are made Christians, that you may always do the works of Christ, that is to say, that you should love chastity, fly from luxury and drunkenness, that you should hold to humility and detest pride, because our Lord Christ showed humility by example and taught it by his words, desiring you to learn of him who was meek and humble of heart, and saying that you would find rest unto your souls. Beware of envying: have charity to each other, and always think of the future life and of eternal happiness, and labour more for your soul than for your body, because the flesh will be but for a short time in the world, whereas the soul will either reign for ever in heaven, or else will burn eternally in hell. It is not, therefore, enough, dearest brethren, that you bear the Christian name, if you do not perform Christian works; for to him only is it of advantage to be called a Christian who always retains in his mind the precepts of Christ and perfects them in his work; who does not steal, does not bear false witness, does not commit adultery, hates no man, but loves all men, and prays for his enemies and makes peace. He is a good Christian who places all his hope in Christ alone; who receives strangers joyfully as Christ himself, because he says, 'I was a stranger, and you took me in;' who washes their feet, and loves them as his dearest relations; who gives alms according to his ability, who comes frequently to the church, and offers his oblations at the altar of God; who has no false weights, who lends not his money on usury, who lives chastely, and who teaches his children and neighbours to live chastely in the fear of God, who reverences

* Cours d'Hist. Moderne, tom. IV. 6.

the holy solemnities of the Church, that with a secure conscience he may approach to the altar of the Lord. Lo, brethren, this it is to be a good Christian. While you have time, therefore, bear in mind and fulfil the precepts of Christ, give alms, have peace and charity, prevent discord, fly falsehood, do not steal, offer oblations and tenths to the churches, and exhibit lights at the holy places, and see that your children live always in the fear of God; hallow the Sunday, abstaining from all servile work through reverence for the resurrection of Christ, and celebrate the solemnities of the saints with pious affection, and, above all things have charity; be hospitable, be humble, casting all your care upon God, for he careth for you, visit the sick and the prisoners, receive strangers, feed the hungry, clothe the naked. Despise fortune-tellers and magicians, and beware above all things how you observe the sacrilegious customs of the Pagans, how you consult or interrogate for any cause the diviners or casters of nativities, because he who does this evil, immediately loses the sacrament of baptism. In like manner, attend not to omens, to sneezing, or to birds, or to what you meet when you first go out on your journey, but whether on a journey, or whatever you do, sign yourself in the name of Christ, and say the Creed and Paternoster with faith and devotion, and then no enemy can hurt you. Let no Christian observe what day he goes out or returns home, because God has made all days; let no one attend to the day or to the moon for beginning any work; let no one practise the pagan buffooneries at the kalends in January, or believe in any charms, for they are diabolical works; let no one on the festival of St. John, or of any of the saints, observe the solstices, or dances, or diabolical songs, or invoke Neptune, Diana, or Minerva; let no one pass Thursday in idleness, or any day in May, or any day excepting Sundays and the festivals of the saints; let no Christian resort to the temples, or to rocks, or fountains, or trees, or to holes; let no one presume to hang round the neck of a man or animal any ligament, although it should be done by a clerk, and although it be said that it is a holy thing and contains divine readings, for there is not in it the remedy of Christ but the poison of the devil. Let no woman call upon Minerva in any work of weaving or dying, but in every work desire the grace of Christ, and trust in the virtue of his name. Let no one presume to cry out if the moon be eclipsed,

or fear to begin any work at the new moon, for God made the moon to dispel the darkness of the night, not to stop the works of men or to make men mad, as some fools think, who being invaded by demons, ascribe what they suffer to the moon; but the sun and moon are the creatures of God, and serve to the necessities of men by his order. And let the sick have no recourse to magicians, but let them trust in the sole mercy of God, and let them receive the eucharist of the body and blood of Christ with faith and devotion, and let them seek the blessed oil from the Church, that their bodies may be anointed in the name of Christ, and that, according to the apostle, the prayer of faith may save them, and the Lord will raise them up, and will restore the health not only of their bodies but of their souls. Above all things, whether at home or on a journey, take heed that no shameful or luxurious words proceed from your mouths, and that you sing no songs of the Gentiles, and reject with all horror those inventions of the enemy, and exhibit veneration to no creature but only to God and to his saints. Make no similitude of feet which are placed at the meeting of two ways, but if you find them burn them with fire, and adore not the heavens, or the stars, or the earth, or any other creature, because God hath made and disposed them all. High, indeed, are the heavens, vast the earth, immense the sea, beautiful the stars, but more immense and more beautiful is He who created them; and if those things that we see are so incomprehensible, that is, the various fruits of the earth, the beauty of flowers, the diversity of fruits, the races of animals, the prudence of the bees, the winds and the dew, and the lightning, and the succession of the seasons, all which things no human mind can fully comprehend; if these things are such which we behold, what must be those heavenly things which have not yet been seen? or what their Maker whose hand created them, or by whose will they are all governed? Brethren, Him you must fear above all things, adore him, love him, hold to his mercy, and never despair of his goodness. Imitate the good and correct the wicked, and let him that hath sinned do penance from all his heart; for if he should die without penance, he will not go to redemption but to hell for ever. Let no one get drunk, or persuade another to drink more than is convenient. Every Sunday come together to the church, and pray for the peace of the church and for your own forgiveness. Judges, judge

justly; receive not gifts, nor attend to persons. You who govern, and you who are governed, be grounded equally in the fear of God. Have Christ always in your mind, and his sign upon your forehead. You have many adversaries who hasten to prevent your course, and therefore, in every place and every hour, arm yourselves with the sign of the cross, for this alone is what they fear. Moreover the sign of Christ is a great thing, and the cross of Christ; but it is only of advantage to those who keep the commands of Christ. Therefore, see that you keep them with all your strength, and whether you sit or walk, or eat, or ascend your bed, or rise from it, let the sign of Christ guard your forehead, and the memory of God always protect you. And when you shall fulfil all these things with the divine aid, know ye that the devil will be grieved, and perhaps will send some evil or infirmity to you, but do not despair, for God permits this to prove you, and therefore bless him for ever; and if once or twice you resist manfully, he will never permit the devil again to tempt you. And wonder not if even these diviners should foretell the truth, for he can easily foresee the future, and the divine scripture says, 'Etiam si vera dixerint vobis, nolite credere eis';* but nothing can hurt you beyond what God permits, and he permits only that he may either prove the just or correct the sinner. As for the poor, be bountiful in your alms to them; give money and purchase everlasting life. He that hath gold let him give gold, he that hath silver, silver; but he that hath no money, with a good mind let him give a mouthful to the poor, for no poor man can dispense himself from giving alms, since a cup of cold water is to have its reward. God might make all men rich, but he wished that there should be poor, that the rich might redeem their sins. Redeem yourselves while you live, because after death no one can redeem you. Let every one give the tenth of his substance to the poor or to the churches, for God is worthy to receive this at our hands. If any poor should die of hunger and you have not given, you will be their murderers. And do not choose to whom you will show mercy, lest perchance you should pass over him who deserves to receive it, because you know not in whom Christ may come to you. Do this that it may be well with you, and that God may bless you. Remember these things always; tell them to your children and to your neighbours, when you sit in your houses

* Deut. xiii.

and when you walk by the way. Consider what the blessed John the apostle says, 'Novissima hora est.' Therefore love not the world, because it will soon pass and its concupiscence with it; but do the will of God that you may remain for ever, that you may have confidence when he shall appear, and that you may not be confounded at his advent. Consider, I entreat you, therefore what a destructive thing it is to do the works of the devil and to be partakers of his punishment. If any man sin let him not rest in deadly security; let him do penance. Let him that was proud be humble, that was an adulterer be chaste, that was a thief be now a dispenser of his own goods to the churches and to the poor; he that was envious, let him be benign; he that was drunken, let him be sober; he that was choleric, let him be patient; he that hath injured another, let him ask pardon; and he that hath been injured, let him pardon, for let no one deceive you; for if he should hold one man in the world in enmity, whatever good works he may offer to God, he loses them all, for the apostle does not lie, terribly exclaiming, 'He that hateth his brother is a murderer and a liar, and walketh in darkness;' and by brother every man is meant, for we are all brethren in Christ. So then, brethren, run while you have light, before the darkness shall come upon you; while you labour for the flesh, labour also for the spirit. When you fast, give what you would have eaten to the poor, and remember that what your body is when it goes without food for a long time, that your soul is when deprived for any considerable time of hearing the word of God. Let each man love his wife without dissimulation, but as for concubines, either before or after marriage, whoever is thus guilty, deserves to be cut off from the society of Christians, and without penance will burn without remedy in eternal flames; for what is unlawful for women, is equally so for men. Therefore, Christian soul, take heed. Watch, pray, and beware of these crimes. Open your hand to the poor, that Christ may open his door to you, and that you may enter into the joys of paradise. Amend your lives, and then you will never despair of pardon, whatever sins you may have committed. Despair is greater than all sins, therefore never despair of God's mercy, neither after the hundredth time of sinning, nor after the thousandth, for there is no sin so grievous but there is pardon for it by penance. Despise no one,—no poor man, no slave,—because perhaps he is

better than you before God, and because we are all one in Christ Jesus. The Lord not only admonishes us, but with ineffable goodness entreats us to be converted to him. Let us hear him now, when he asks us, lest otherwise he should not hear us when we shall come to judgment. Be separated then from the devil, and joined to God who hath redeemed you, and place all your hope in the mercy of Christ, and guard your souls, not only from a shameful act, but also from every base thought; because the Lord God is a just judge, and will judge the thoughts of the heart. Abstain altogether from swearing, and beware that you give not scandal to any man. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so you will fulfil the law of Christ. Watch carefully, because the nearer that the world shall approach to its end, the more cruelly will the devil rage against Christians; knowing that he is soon to be condemned, and that he may multiply his companions. Take heed, therefore, and know that each of you has an angel of God who watches over you continually, and if you do well you rejoice him, and if evil you drive him from you, and make place for a malignant demon. Look well, therefore, into yourselves, and see whether you have minds corresponding with angelic purity; and if you see that you are good, never presume upon your merits with a proud mind, but rather so much the more take heed with humility. And have a horror of all excess in eating and drinking, which leads to other sins; and this I say, not that I should ascribe evil to the creature of God, but that I should render you more sober and cautious. Nay, I admonish you, that you never call any creature of God evil, for whatever seems evil to us, is evil not from its own nature but from our sins. Beware of the broad way which leadeth to destruction, follow the narrow by which eternal happiness is found. When you have a feast call the poor and the stranger, for it is not just that, in a Christian people, some should be inflated while others are in danger of perishing through hunger. Wherefore should not the poor man partake of your meat, who is to enjoy along with you the society of angels? Wherefore should he not receive one tunic, who is alike to receive the stole of immortality? So live, then, that when you depart hence, and your flesh shall be devoured by worms in the tomb, your soul, adorned with good works, may rejoice with the saints in heaven. Behold, a little while and the world shall cease, and all visible things shall pass away like a cloud, or like the

evening shadow. Therefore, love not the world, which thus declines to its end, especially since the apostle declares that its friendship is enmity with God. Love, therefore, eternal life, and hasten there, where you will live for ever, and never fear to die. If you so love this miserable and flowing life, where you live with such labour, and where by running, and searching, and sighing, you can scarcely satisfy the necessities of the body, how much more ought you to love the eternal life, where you will have no labour to endure, where you will enjoy the utmost security, and happiness, and freedom, and where men will be like the angels, not in substance but in beatitude; and where the just shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father? What do you think will be the splendour of souls when the light of bodies will have the brightness of the sun? There will be no sorrow, no fear, no death, no malice, no want, no terror of barbarians or of torture, no hunger, no thirst, no cold, no heat, no temptation of the enemy, no wish to sin, no possibility of falling; but men and angels will enjoy a perpetual spring in felicity and peace, and amidst the splendours of an endless solemnity. Therefore, brethren, let us not serve sin and lose this happiness which is prepared in heaven, but let us regard ourselves as strangers upon earth, that we may hasten with more speed there; for all things that are seen will quickly pass away, quickly like a shadow.

"See, then, dearly beloved, I have set this before you with simplicity, that each of you may know what is to become of him. No one can now plead ignorance, since you have heard of life and death, the punishment of the wicked, and the glory of the just. It remains for you to choose which you will have. Defer not, then, your conversion. Let him that is bound with the chain of his sins rise up now quickly, and awake from the sleep of death. Let him haste to confession and do penance, nor let him blush, for it is better to have shame here for a little time, than to endure the punishment for so many millions of ages. If he be penitent from his heart, the Redeemer will soon raise him up, for he raised up Lazarus after he had been four days dead and was now stinking; for he willeth not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live. And besides, see now what evils daily press upon us, indicating that the end of the world is at hand. Nothing remains, then, but alone the day of God's judgment, and the coming of the

terrible antichrist. Behold war upon war, tribulation upon tribulation, famine upon famine, pestilence upon pestilence, and nation rising up against nation. Why have we breasts of stone and iron, that we should not think for the remedy of our souls among so many evils! Beloved, I admonish you, as the world seems coming to an end, so let human malice. We cannot have both Christ and the world for our portion. And, above all, let us love God, for it is impious not to love him who descended from the seat of paternal majesty to save undeserving men. Have charity, which is the bond of unity; have charity, and you will have all virtues. As far as in us lies, let us keep all the precepts of God; and let us hasten where death will not be feared, and where all the saints are waiting and desiring to receive and behold us; where Christ our celestial King and the angels, the heavenly citizens are expecting us with outstretched arms. O, then, I say, let us hasten where we shall live for ever, and be joined to the angelic host, and delivered from all contagion of sin, our Lord Jesus Christ presiding with God the Father and the Holy Ghost, who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen."*

With such familiar instructions he daily taught the people: he did not prefer a rich man to a poor man, nor a prince or noble to a mean person, but on the contrary he appeared more austere to the former, while he evinced great modesty to the others: his servants, too, were treated by him with the utmost benignity, and not after the manner of master and servant; he was strong to execute all tolerance, and mild to bear injuries. Thus did he exercise himself in every labour, and at length when he was old and past his seventieth year, perceiving the dissolution of his body to be near at hand, one day walking with his disciples in the city of Noyon, and casting his eyes by chance, he saw that part of the wall of the front of the Basilica of St. Medard was crumbling to decay, and immediately ordered workmen to be employed in strengthening it with ligaments; and his disciples saying it would be better to wait until it might be more solidly repaired, he replied, "Let it be

done now while I remain, lest otherwise it be never done." At this word they were troubled, and said, "May it not happen to your servants to behold what you say; but may the Lord permit you to remain long with us to be the ornament of the church and the guardian of the poor;" but he, looking up to heaven and sighing, said, "Not your will but God's will be done in me. Be not cast down, my sons, but rather rejoice and congratulate me, because long ago I desired this time to arrive." Thus ended their conversation for that day. Shortly after he was seized with a fever, and then he knew that he was to die, and so he assembled all his servants and ministers, and exhorted them as usual to follow peace and to keep the bond of unity. Still he continued to perform all his usual exercises, and he spent his nights in prayer and watching. On the day preceding the kalends of December, he again assembled all his servants and disciples, and thus spoke to them:—"Dearly beloved, hear my last sentences. If you have ever loved me strive to fulfil the divine law; always breathe Jesus, and fix his precepts in your minds. If you ever loved me, love the name of Christ as I have done; fear always the tremendous judgment of God, for I, according to the language of the Scriptures, am going the way of all the earth; and now I desire to be dissolved, and if it shall please the Lord, in peace. Behold this day I commend to your hands the salvation of your souls, and keep me in memory, for Eligius departs and will be no longer with you in this world." All that stood round him wept and lamented, which the pious pastor perceiving, suffered his tears to flow, rejoicing for himself, but having compassion on those that he was to leave. At length resuming his discourse, he continued, "Do not lament, and do not distress me with your weeping, for if you were truly wise you would rejoice, and not grieve; for though absent in body, I shall be present in spirit; and though it should be otherwise, yet God is always present with you, and to him I commend you." It was now the close of the day, and he fell upon his knees on the ground, and besought God that he would provide a pastor for his people who should rule them with modesty, for to the last his only care was for others; and now, as the cold of death spread over him, he called all his disciples and companions, and embraced them, and wished them farewell, saying "I cannot speak to

* This was the sermon from which a garbled extract was adduced in evidence, by modern English historians, to prove that in the middle ages the clergy taught that nothing was required to make a good Christian but the punctual payment of tithes.

you any longer, and you will see my face no more. Therefore farewell in peace—and suffer me now to rest, and permit my material part to return to its parent earth.” Then after a pause, with suppliant eyes raised to heaven, he prayed in silence, and at length burst out, saying, “Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace :” remember that thou didst form me from the clay—and enter not into judgment with thy servant ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified ; and then after a little, he added, “O Christ, Redeemer of the world, who alone art without sin, remember me—and leading me from the body of this death, save me in thy heavenly kingdom : thou wert always my protector—‘In manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.’ I know that I do not deserve to behold thy face ; yet thou knowest that always my hope was in thy mercy, my faith in thy goodness, and now with the confession of thy name, O Christ, I breathe my last sigh. Receive me then according to thy great mercy ; open to me the gates of life, and let not the prince of darkness meet me, nor the powers of the air disturb me, but stretch forth thy hand and lead me into the place of refreshment which thou hast prepared for thy servants.” With these words his spirit departed at the first hour of the night ; his body placed upon a bier was borne into the church, and there the clergy in turn sung the hymns, while the people lamented, and spent the night in watching. Early the next morning the queen Bathilde, with her daughters, and many princes, came to the town, and bitterly lamented that they had not arrived in time to find the holy man alive. Then after a general fast of three days the funeral was marshalled, and though it was the winter season, no persuasions could detain the devout queen from following the bier on foot with all her family ; and so amidst the tears and groans of the poor and all the people, and of the monks who came from all parts, the holy bishop was carried to his grave.* The discourse of Eligius, and the conclusion of his life, hath detained us, reader : but the influence which yet lives in these words of heaven, with Apostolic radiance compassed, will compensate the brief delay. It is not for my lips to comment such a teacher. With fear and reverence mute let us pass on.

* Vita S. Eligii, B. Audeni Episcop. Auct. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. V.

Profane historians have occasion repeatedly to mention the preachers of the middle ages, and to record instances of the great effects resulting from their zeal. It is related of S. Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, that in preaching he seemed to possess the tongue of an angel, so that no one by description could give an idea of the grace and sweetness of his discourse. A multitude of clerks and laics after hearing him commenced a new life, and studied to embrace a holy conversation, and to adhere wholly and for ever to God. A noble woman, Ela, countess of Salisbury, persuaded her husband William Longsword to hear him. The count had lived a worldly life, without any thought for a long time of confession, and of receiving the body of Christ according to the manner of the universal church. The words and the very countenance of Edmund had such an impression upon him, that he changed his life and became totally a new man : he confessed his sins to a hermit to whom Edmund referred him, and with due reverence received the holy eucharist. Edmund in preaching used to hold a crucifix in his hand, beholding which he would weep and smile—weep to think, as he said, that there were many hearers and so few doers of the word, while they had the passion of Christ before their eyes, and the example of the saints—and smile when he regarded the cross with pious eyes, and thought upon the benefits which it had conferred upon the whole world.*

Robert canon of St. Marien d'Auxerre and Jacques de Vitry, describe a contemporary priest, Foulques, who went about as a missionary, preaching penance and conversion to God, through France, Flanders, and Burgundy, and working great reformation among usurers and persons of profligate character, being in age a young man, but in science and in manners most eminent. All the people used to call him “the holy man.” Pierre Chantre in the year 1180, wishing to give Foulques, who had been his disciple, an opportunity of exerting his talents, caused him to preach in his presence, and before many learned men in the church of St. Severin at Paris. Jaques de Vitry says, “that God gave such a blessing to his sermons, although they were in a very simple style, that even all the learned philosophers of Paris, used to excite each other to come and hear the

* Vita S. Edmundi, apud Martene Thesaur. Anecd. tom. III.

priest Foulques, who preached, said they, like a second St. Paul. They used even to bring tablets with them in order to write down his words.* Foulques died young in the year 1201, being curate of Neuilly sur Marne.† Many eminent preachers followed in his steps, among whom were Peter Chantre, Robert de Cuthon, Walter of London, Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, John de Nivelles, and Eustache, abbot of Flay.

The journal of the reign of Charles VII. records that in the year 1429, at Boulogne, near Paris, brother Richard, a Franciscan, being lately returned from Jerusalem, made so affecting a sermon, that on the return of the people to Paris there were seen more than an hundred fires, in which men burned tables, cards, and billiards, while women burned extravagant pompous ornaments, with which they used to adorn their heads.‡ This holy friar used to preach also in the cemetery of the holy Innocents, to the infinite admiration of the people. His sermons used generally to last six hours.§ In general, however, the sermons of the middle ages were not prolix. "A tedious sermon," says Guibert de Nogent, "only causes anger. What was good in it is forgotten, and men go away feeling only aversion."|| St. Francis expressly directed his friars in preaching to use brevity of discourse, because a short word will the Lord make upon the earth. Whatever faults may have been committed by the Florentines at the time of the preaching of Friar Jerome, however justly Petrus Delphinus may have accused him of imprudence,¶ still a spirit of great piety seems to have characterised the measure which Pignotti stigmatises as a sacred farce. At the instigation of the friars, during the carnival a numerous flock of children, appointing deputies for every quarter, went in humility and devotion to all the houses, asking for the anatheme, or all that was profane, such as obscene pictures and books, which were freely granted to them, whilst the devout female sex, yielding humbly to these innocent preachers, suffered themselves to be despoiled of the dearest ornaments of personal decoration, and of every thing that had been invented to give a false appear-

ance to beauty. On the last day of the carnival, after having heard mass, clothed in white, carrying on their heads garlands of olive, and red crosses in their hands, they proceeded, singing psalms, to the Piazzo dei Signori, where a pyramidal scaffold had been erected, upon which these instruments of pleasure and profane luxury were deposited. The children mounted the rostrum, and after having sung spiritual hymns, the four deputies came down with lighted torches, and set fire to the pile, which was consumed amidst the voices of joy and the sound of trumpets. It was this fire which make fools the rich who now collect the first editions of Boccaccio. While Savonarola confined his preaching to the reformation of manners, he did but adopt the style of the middle ages, which he defended with great power against the sophists, who despised it. "They love not the sacred Scriptures," he exclaims, "they understand them not, they taste them not. Our soul, we hear them say, is weary of this light bread—let us have the eloquence of Cicero, the verses of poets, the subtle sentences of Aristotle. Preach to us subtle things."* Certainly one may derive a great insight into the character of such men as John Picus of Mirandola, Hermolaus Barbarus, Marcellus Ficinus, Lorenzo de Medici, and Angelo Politian, from the one fact that Savonarola, while he merely announced the word of God with boldness, was their favourite companion, and the preacher whom they heard with the greatest respect and admiration. They beheld not in him one who might forget the precept of Christ, and make no distinction between the chair and him who sat thereon: and after all, who that has ever heard the issue should presume to condemn a man dear to Philip Neri and Catherine Ricci whom holy church hath canonised, to whom the offering of prayer as to a saint seems to have been sanctioned by the thirteenth Benedict, and whose memory Paul the fourth hath solemnly absolved? Politically their antagonist, the Medicæan princes revered in him the minister of the Most High, and John Francis of Mirandola observes, that not even the enemies of that friar ever dared to question the integrity and sanctity of his life and manners.† Even when expressions seem to indicate that

* Buleus, Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. II.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. I.

c. 4. ‡ Ibid. tom. III. 23.

§ Pasquier, Recherches de la France, Lib. VI.

39. || Lib. quo ordine sermo fieri debeat.

¶ Annal. Camaldul. Lib. LXVIII.

* De Simplicitate Vitæ Christianæ, Lib. I.

† J. F. Pic. de Studio Divin. et Hum. Scientiæ, I. 27.

somewhat of human eloquence was sought for in the pulpit, the description of preachers at that time would lead one to form a very high idea of their merit. Angelo Politian in a letter to Tristan Chalvus, confesses that when he first went to hear Marianus Genazaansis preach, he went as if to explore and with little respect, but when he saw the habit of the man, and state, and as it were the nature in his eyes, and the countenance no way vulgar, he began to expect what was in fact the result. "Lo then he begins to speak," saith he, "I stretch out my ears, I hear a sonorous voice, choice words, grand sentences: I am already caught—he proceeds—he is stopped by nothing, there is nothing that wants a termination: he argues, I am ensnared; he adds little narrations. I am led away; he modulates a verse, I am captive; he even jests, I laugh; he presses, he urges, I give him my hands; he tries the milder affections, immediately my tears steal down; he cries out in anger, I am terrified, and I repent having come. I confess for my part he seems in the pulpit to surpass himself, and frequently even the measure of man. While I contemplate, too, all this in detail, I fancy that after a while, when the novelty is over, he will less affect me; but the contrary is the fact, for the next day I hear him as if he were a new man, only better than he appeared the day before, when he seemed to have attained perfection. Nor would you despise that little body, so unconquerable and indefatigable, which seems to repair its strength by fresh labour. Moreover, when I went into the country, I lived familiarly with him in the same house, and I never saw any one more placid and more cautious; his severity would not intimidate, yet his facility would not corrupt you. Only in the pulpit he shows the censor; when he descends he is all civility, so that when he is with Picus of Mirandola, and me, we find no remedy so effectual as his conversation against the sadness of literary labour. Lorenzo de Medici himself, an acute observer of dispositions, prefers a little walk with him to all the recreations of a city life. Only examine the man near, and you will praise the judgment of your Politian. You will find a man who is never troublesome, and who is incapable of giving offence."*

William of Malmesbury relates that

* Angelo Politian, *Epist. Lib. IV.*

St. Wolstan, when a monk at Worcester used to give himself up wholly to spiritual discipline, and that although rude as to secular science, he was, nevertheless, considered one of the most eloquent preachers in the English tongue; of which there was a remarkable proof given by the citizens of Bristol: for when neither the royal nor the pontifical power could deter them from the nefarious trade of native slaves, this holy preacher by constant sermons, reduced them to a more sound mind.* A learned Dane who has lately visited our shores, expresses admiration at the merit of the Anglo-Saxon homilies. "I have felt," he says, "a high degree of interest in looking into this mirror of Anglo-Saxon divinity, and I doubt not that many an individual on reading these sermons, would form quite another idea of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, than he has imbibed from the current representations of them in our civil and ecclesiastical histories." Noel Deslandes, bishop of Treguier in the sixteenth century, was endowed with such extraordinary powers of persuasion, that the churches could not contain the crowds which assembled to hear his sermons, so that stages used to be erected outside before the windows of cathedrals, upon which auditors were placed. At the consecration of the church at Ferentinum in the year 1191, the almost incredible admiration of the people on hearing the subtle sermon of Cardinal Jordan, is attested by history.† Scarcely had the barefooted Carmelite father Peter made one sermon in Naples, when a change began to appear in the manners of the people. The vast capital became penitent Nineveh. The most desperate sinners, hearing the thunder come from his mouth, shed torrents of tears, and changed their lives, so great was the force of his preaching, joined with the sanctity of his life. In like manner, the sermons of the archbishop of Granada, in the last century, induced multitudes of Spaniards to renounce the custom of carrying poignards. But if we discover in history that such great excellence, and such prodigious effects, belonged to the preaching of men who were otherwise obscure, what must we conclude respecting the merits and influence of the eminent doctors who have left even upon earth an imperishable renown? "In the midst of the church

* Guil. Malmes. in *vita ejus Ang. Sac. tom. II.*
† *Italia Sacra, I.*

he opened his mouth; and the Lord filled him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and clothed him with a stole of glory." This is what the Church sings at the commemoration of her canonized teachers, and history, in reference to each, confirms the attestation. Who could enumerate the multitudes that were melted into love and obedience by the meek and gentle flow of that wondrous source of living justice which Cîteaux's cloister furnished in the person of her Bernard? And still let us keep in mind that all the great preachers of whom we read had been formed by the example and instruction of others whose renown hath perished. It was by hearing the sermon of Jordan, general of the Dominicans, that Albert the Great was moved to enter immediately that order. "Greece," exclaims St. Gregory of Tours, "was happy, which deserved to hear Paul preaching; but Gaul is not forsaken by Christ, to whom the Lord vouchsafes a Martin."* St. Romuald in preaching was said to resemble one of the seraphs, for he burned with a flame of divine love, and kindled those who heard him. Wherever he went to preach, discords were appeased, the poor liberally assisted, the manners and conversation of men reformed. All justice followed works of penance, works of mercy.† No one could ever hear St. Bonaventura preach without loving and venerating him, such a celestial charity was diffused by his very looks. The learned Ambrosius Camaldulensis speaks in admiration of the eloquence of St. Bernardine of Sienna, to whom he writes, on hearing that it is in contemplation to raise him to the episcopal office, apprising him of the universal alarm which the report has produced, lest that dignity should cause an interruption to his sermons, and diminish the effect of his preaching. He styles him the admirable trumpet of Jesus Christ, our Lord, the defender and preacher of poverty, whose cry smites the proudest summits. He speaks of his friend who heard him preach at Rome; and who describes that inexhaustible and immortal flood of divine eloquence always increasing in magnificence from the sweet lips of brother Bernardine, who with the eloquence of the holy Scriptures, and the omnipotence of the most victorious name of Jesus, had led such multitudes of the highest and lowest degrees from the darkness of ignorance, and the sea of all vices,

to embrace with the purest devotion the worship of that most holy name.* His fears were groundless; for though many cities sought Bernardine for their chair, he declared that he would never lay aside the habit and poverty of St. Francis. So that he is represented in painting with three mitres at his feet, to signify his refusal of Sienna, Ferrara, and Milan. When this holy friar first came to Milan, his name was hardly known. Maffaeus Veggius says, "When I was a boy about twelve years old, I remember seeing him, and hearing him preach to the people, before he was so celebrated; for I had a grammar master, the best of old men, who loved to hear him, and on festival days he would always go, and lead with him some of his favourite scholars, among whom I was. He used often to say to us, 'Let us go, boys, to hear that good friar clad in so poor a habit, but with such grace upon his tongue.' He constantly affirmed that he had never heard any one like him. Trusting to my master's judgment, and not to my own, which was not prodigious, as you may suppose, at that tender age, I revered the man, and listened to him most attentively, though I could hardly appreciate the weight and majesty of his grave sentences; but as I believed him to be such as my master judged, all that he said seemed to me to issue from a divine mouth. While thus preaching daily to the people, he was known only to a few of the learned; but by degrees he began to attract general attention, and at the close of his Lent sermons, so well was he appreciated, that from that time nothing was more illustrious than the name of Bernardine. It was wonderful to behold the crowds that flocked to hear him, and that were converted by him. They ran to the church like ants, and there were not priests enough to hear their confessions, and administer the sacraments. In one year the number of communions equalled that of ten ordinary years. Marvellous too, it was to see such numbers of young nobles educated in the utmost delicacy and splendour, now voluntarily seeking the humiliation of the minors, and exchanging profane for holy songs." The preaching of this holy friar was celebrated, not only in Italy, but throughout the world. Copies of his sermons were disseminated through Spain, France, the British Islands, Germany, Hungary, Cyprus, the coast of Asia, Greece, and through many oriental nations. Robbery

* Lib. Mirac. de Martini, cap. I.

† Annalium Camaldul. Lib. VII.

* Annal. Camaldulens. Lib. LX.

on the highways, piracy at sea, faction, that had imbedded with blood the streets of cities, superstitions and cruelties worthy of Gentiles, profanation and utter neglect of the festivals, the disuse of prayer, and of assisting at mass, atrocious spectacles, all the horrors and desolations which were the seeds of the heresy of the sixteenth century, yielded to his voice. Through this perishing world did he walk, preaching Jesus and the resurrection to judgment, nor was he otherwise received than as an apostle of Christ. The crowds used to assemble at break of day, many coming from a distance of thirty miles to hear him, as if they believed that the Holy Ghost would descend upon them as formerly upon those who believed on hearing the apostles. No one could describe the fruits which followed his preaching, nor tell how many cities and individuals laid aside enmity for peace, how many licentious youths were reclaimed to a holy life, how many dissipated women were prevailed on to renounce the ways of vanity; restitution, to the amount sometimes of a thousand gold ducats, used to be made; tables for play, and other instruments of dissipation, used to be brought to him, and thrown into the flames, while new hospitals and convents marked every way on which he had passed.* "O how many lucrative, but sinful kinds of commerce, were renounced!" cries one who had heard him; "how many impositions in buying and selling, how many perjuries and deceptions at an end! How many sons rendered dutiful to their parents; how many parents careful of their children; how many married persons re-united in love and fidelity, how many masters made gentle, how many servants faithful, how many of all classes restored to wisdom, and to the peaceful port of blessed religion! If antiquity extolled Pythagoras for having reformed one city, what praise is due to him who imbued with such superior doctrines innumerable multitudes of people in every state of Italy? At Bologna, he preached from the steps of St. Petronio, and dice-tables were thrown into a vast fire made in the centre of the square. An artizan soon afterwards complained that he could paint nothing else, and that with these he had before supported his family, to whom Bernardine replied, "If you can paint nothing else, paint this figure," and making a circle he formed a sun within it, and in the centre he wrote the name of Jesus, which we can now see under the porch of the good Jesus, with the effigy of the saint. Then the

people being directed by Bernardine, came to purchase these new tables, and the man drew more profit than before. A table of this kind on which the holy name was painted within rays of gold, he used to hold in his hand while preaching, and present it from time to time to the people. Inflamed by his sermons at Florence, after a public supplication, the people erected a vast stone in the square of Santa Croce, on which was inscribed the name of Jesus. It was thus that they replied to the enemies of the holy man, who accused him of extravagance in adopting this manner of expressing veneration for the sacred name. At Sienna, also, after a public solemnity, the magistrates of the city, and clergy, decreed public honours to this tablet, and had it beautifully painted in the characters proposed by Bernardine on the city hall. The fruits of St. Bernardine's preaching were gathered in many cities of Italy long after he had passed from the world, as Robert de Lycio testifies. Several celebrated preachers, however, succeeded him, who were supposed to have imitated his style. John de Capistrano was followed by such multitudes, that it was always necessary in passing through the crowd, to protect him with guards, or torch-bearers, lest he should be suffocated. During forty years from his entering the order of Minors, till the end of his life, he preached constantly to faithful and infidels, the Lord co-operating and confirming his word with signs following. To hear the sermons of Bernardine of Monta Felto, cities and princes contended with each other. After preaching for some time in Venice, he was about to depart to Padua, to preach there during the Lent of 1417, but the Venetians entreated Vendramino, the doge, to detain him, which he endeavoured to do; but the friar replied that he must obey his superiors, and so, during a tempestuous night, he left Venice, while the authorities were preparing to elude the mandate of his superiors, by obtaining letters from Pope Sixtus, ordering him to remain. Again, in 1485, after preaching with great fruit at Parma, in the cathedral, at the end of the year being ordered, by pontifical letters from Innocent VIII., to preach at Bologna, the citizens of Parma applied to the duke of Milan, to request that he would prevent his leaving them. The prefect of the city issued an ordinance to forbid his departure. After some delay, he obtained leave to go to the neighbouring convent of his order, and thence he effected his escape during the night, and taking desert mountain ways,

* *Wad. Ann. Minorum* Vol. IV. and V.

succeeded in pursuing his journey safe to the appointed city. The next year, he again preached the Lent at Parma, and before its expiration he received an invitation from the Florentines, who entreated that he would preach the Lent in the following year at Florence. On leaving Padua in 1492, he received deputies from the magistrates of Bassano, Cittadello, Castra Nuova, Novalis, and Asoli, entreating that he would preach at least once in their respective towns. While he was at Florence in 1493, application was made to the vicar general to order him to preach at so many different places that it was impossible to satisfy them in one year. He was demanded by Brixen, Milan, Ravenna, Perugia, Assisium, Spoleto, Messana, and Palermo. The Spanish ambassador came to him with much reverence, and entreated that he would pass into Spain, where the seeds of sacred doctrine, he said, would yield an abundant harvest. In 1494 he was detained at Mantua, through the indecision of the vicar general, who was perplexed with the multitude of claims respecting him. How many noble cities contended for him! What a sensation in the Roman court! What an emulation among great princes to obtain a sight of one little, humble friar, and have him for a corrector of their manners! Many interesting details are given respecting the enthusiasm with which he was every where received. When he preached at Mantua, not only all the citizens, but all the people within twelve miles of the surrounding country came to hear him, in presence of whom he boldly admonished the marquis Frederic, on account of the injustice and neglect of his government: all trembled for him, but the prince replied to his courtiers, that the friar had done his duty, and that he wished others might follow his example. When he travelled he found it almost always necessary to set out during the night, to avoid the multitude that would follow him; and from Aquilæa, though he departed at midnight, he was attended by vast crowds, from which he could not escape. Sometimes, as at Brixton, he left his companions in the city to conceal more effectually his departure. In 1492, as he approached Castel Franco, the governor of the city, with the chief men, came out to the distance of four miles to meet him, and with the greatest joy led him into the city. When he returned to Monte Felto, his fellow citizens prepared him a triumphal entry. The houses were all hung with tapestry, and the streets adorned with garlands. The

town was completely filled with the multitude. The inns did not suffice, and many passed the night in the churches and under the porticoes. The people left the neighbouring towns in such numbers, that the magistrates, fearing lest they should be wholly deserted, and so become a prey to the enemy, for the Germans and Venetians were then at war, issued a decree forbidding more than three hundred persons to leave any town at a time. Even the Germans, though but little acquainted with Italian, used to come to his sermons; but these were only admitted for the day, and at night a herald commanded them to leave the city, their wives and children, however, being permitted to sleep in the public porches, the prætor giving them guards, lest they should suffer any injury during the night. At the festival of St. Bernardine of Sienna, a storm came on during his sermon, and as the awning with which the whole market-place was covered became agitated, the people had no shelter from the wind and rain. Through pity for them, he sought twice or thrice to finish his sermon, but each time the whole assembly exclaimed that he should continue, and during a tempest of two hours they heard him preach. Another time, leaving Cremona to preach on the Sunday at Lodi, more than two thousand persons set off before him, and travelled all night. When the inhabitants of that town rose early in the morning, and came to the forum, the seats which they had prepared for themselves for the occasion, were already occupied by the people of Cremona, whose zeal filled them with admiration. In 1493 being ordered to proceed to Aretium, to repress the tumultuous populace, he left Florence secretly, according to his custom; but yet he could not prevent many nobles, doctors, and religious men, from following him. Leaving Ponte Levano about midnight, he found more than four hundred persons waiting outside the gates to hear him preach. Unwilling to disappoint them, he said mass before break of day, and then from the altar preached for one hour. At Padua, preaching on the festival of St. Anthony, the magistrates appointed a certain painter to delineate him as he stood in the pulpit. Approaching Clarina, a grammarian with his scholars came to meet him, and recited certain verses in his praise, whom he exhorted to instruct youth in Christian manners and piety. Would you hear now what were the fruits of his apostolic labours? On these history is not silent. After leaving Parma in 1486, on arriving at Modena,

when about to send back the guide, lo, he beheld this youth at his feet, offering him the horse which had carried his books. "O man of God," said he, "I owe thee greater things than this horse; for it has been owing to your words of fire that two debtors of my late father, whose debts were wholly unknown to me, and of which he made no mention in his will, have come to our house, bringing with them the entire sums which they owed to him, in consequence of which I have risen from a wretched to a happy condition." Such were every where the results of his sermons. In 1493 the inhabitants of Pavia were filled with astonishment at their own reformation. "Lo," said they, "that usurer! how liberal he is now to the poor! that intemperate youth, how he curbs his concupiscence! how retired and bashful is become that immodest woman! how many are recalled from evil arts and vanity!" The magistrates observing the effects, published a decree, ordering that all shops should be closed while he was preaching; but he objected to this measure, and persuaded them to withdraw it, and from that time no shop was left open. Here he burnt in one fire objects to the value of two thousand pieces of gold. At his sermons in Sienna, Modena, Parma, and other places, he committed to the flames what were termed castles of Satan, immense piles composed of prohibited books, vain ornaments, cards, and tables. He burnt, at Perugia, books of magic, necromancy, and evil arts, to which that people were addicted, and at Brixon the novels of Boccaccio. He also persuaded scholastic preceptors in various places to cease from explaining Martial's epigrams, Ovid's amatory poetry, Petronius, and other such authors. On leaving Pavia, the citizens erected a new pulpit in the square near the cathedral, on the spot where he had preached. On this they placed his image, under which were inscribed these words, which he used frequently to repeat, "Nolite diligere mundum." On coming to Florence in 1493, Peter de Medicis and the senate had taken alarm, and he was forbidden to preach within the city. When leave was at length granted, he preached in the great square, which was not large enough to contain the multitude, so that the people occupied the roofs and windows of the houses, anxious at least to behold his gestures from a distance. On the following day, many relations of those who had subscribed the edict for expelling him the Florentine state, came and sought his forgiveness, and implored his benediction

for themselves and their families. At Florence he preached every day. In his sermon he spared no abuse, and feared no power. At Padua he preached against timid or corrupt judges, who were moved either by fear or gifts. In 1492, at Viglevano, he preached in the Franciscan church, in presence of Lewis Sforza, duke of Milan, and Beatrice of Este, his wife, and all their ministers; he showed what were the duties of the prince, the proper stipends of ministers, the necessity of paying the debts of creditors, which were then one source of great complaint, and the duty of honouring blessed Mary, towards whom that court had long been noted for its irreverence. On descending, the duke publicly thanked him, and within two days he paid all his debts even to the last farthing, and moreover decreed that in future the dukes of Milan should always celebrate the festival of the immaculate conception, in the church of St. Francis, at Milan, and after the office, distribute great alms to the poor. In 1493, he consoled by his sermons the afflicted and humiliated citizens of Perugia, inveighing against tyranny, hatred, and murder, introducing the persons of the ancient tyrants, Domitian, Nero, Leo, and Dionysius. At these sermons, Guido Ballionus, head of the chief faction, sat always opposite the pulpit, that his presence might intimidate him; but Bernardino was so little daunted, that he kept his eyes fixed on him, while at his look the tyrant turned pale and betrayed the utmost internal anxiety. At Vicenza, he repressed, with a divine power, the vanities of the carnival, so that the impatient youth was persuaded to relinquish its accustomed, and ardently expected amusements; but here the vein which he had ruptured shortly before, when preaching in the town of St. Cassian, again burst, and from that time his dissolution approached rapidly, while he was obliged by physicians to refrain from all exertion during short intervals. At his last sermon, before leaving Padua, he seemed to foresee that he was never to return there. Weak and suffering, he was received into Pavia, amidst triumphant acclamations, and he began his sermon by an allusion to his own approaching death, saying, "Physician cure thyself; apply thy doctrine to thine own heart." But this digression the hearers did not understand till afterwards. Bernardino of Monte Feltro and John de Capistrano, were not, however, the only eminent preachers who succeeded the holy advocate of Sienna. The friars, Matthew of Sicily, Antonio of Bitonto, John of Prato, James

Donzelli of Bologna, Sylvester of Sienna, Antonio of Rimini, Michael of Milan, Antonio of Vercillis, Cherubino of Spoleto, Dominicus of Padua, and Theodoric of Osnaburg, a minor of Cologne, and celebrated throughout Germany, were all conspicuous on the holy mountain, as preaching the precepts of the Lord. Thomas Illyricus, surnamed in France, *le saint homme*, was a preacher whose holy doctrine watered all Europe. This was the friar so dear to pope Clement VII. and who preached with such boldness against the vices of ecclesiastics, and of men in all orders of the state, openly predicting the heresy of Luther fifty years before it broke out, so that he is styled the Cassandra of our evils by Floremund Remund, counsellor of the Parliament of Bordeaux, in his learned work, *De ortu hæreseon*.* These lights have led us to the close of the fifteenth century. Let us go back then to more ancient days.

What would it have been, think you, reader, to have heard St. Bonaventura preach, or to have sat at the feet of the profound and fervent Francis, listening to those simple, moving exhortations which converted whole generations to the love of poverty, and the obedience of Christ! It often happened that more than thirty persons would be converted to penitence, after hearing one of his sermons.† A contemporary monk of St. Justina, at Padua, in his chronicle of the events which passed in Lombardy, describes the effects produced by the two trumpets of heaven, Dominick and Francis, which awakened the sleeping world with a fearful sound, and excited men to battle against the triple enemy. Hell to its centre felt the power of their preaching, which cut off its wonted supplies at the source. All Asti, we read, was moved at the voice of Francis. All began to fear and obey God, to forgive one another, to forget injuries, to bury hatreds, to renounce usury, to make restitution, to avoid pomps and plays, and every kind of luxury. Turin could only be consoled at his departure when he pronounced his solemn blessing over the city, in the words of St. Paul to the Thessalonians. At Cortemilla the country people left their ploughs and implements in the fields, and flocked in to hear his discourses on the vanity of the world which passes away, the penalty that awaits sinners, and

the everlasting beatitude of the just. The hardest hearts were split like rocks of the desert, and the waters of contrition flowed from them. Whenever he entered towns or castles, the clergy used to go forth to meet him, the bells were rung, men exulted, women rejoiced, and the boys and children came out with branches in their hands, glorifying God.* The first act recorded of the blessed Sylvester, the Florentine, indicated the enthusiasm which was produced by a preacher whose sermons he loved to hear; for in the year 1312 he used to assist at the sermons of brother Jordan of Pisa, a celebrated Dominican, in the convent of S. Maria Novella at Florence, who preached with great effect not only in the churches, but in the streets of the city, and while pausing to rest between the divisions of his discourse, Sylvester used to present him with wine, by which attention he first attracted the notice of the preacher, and subsequently became his disciple.†

Berthold of Ratisbon, a Franciscan in the time of Frederick II., commended among the illustrious writers of Germany, whose sepulchre is seen in the convent of the friars at Ratisbon, on which is inscribed nothing but "*Bertholdus magnus Prædicator*," had such a grace of preaching, that often sixty, and sometimes even a hundred thousand persons would assemble to hear him, and wait during many hours for his arrival. The field near Glatz, in Bohemia, where he used to preach, is called the field of Berthold to this day. On one occasion, he spoke with such force against the sin of luxury, that a certain woman who was a public sinner, is said to have expired through contrition on the spot, though others say that she was restored to life, by the intercession of the holy preacher, who rebuked the people for ascribing it to the judgment of God.‡ St. Anthony of Padua preaching at Limoges, such was the multitude of people that there was no church large enough to contain them, and he preached in the open air. A certain woman greatly desiring to hear him, and her husband not choosing to permit her, as it was a league distance from the town, she went up into the granary, in order at least to content her eyes, by looking towards the spot where he was at that moment preaching the word of God.§ Similarly at Padua, there was no church large enough to con-

* Lib. I. c. 3, and 4.

† *Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs*, Lib. II. c. 35.

* Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, tom. I.

† *Annal. Camaldulens.* Lib. XLVII.

‡ Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. IV. a. 1272.

§ *Id.* Lib. v. c. 21.

tain the crowds that flocked to hear him, and he therefore used to preach in the open air, and sometimes in a great field without the walls. The people used to rise by night, and hasten with lanterns to keep places in the field, when it was known he was to preach. There you might have found illustrious nobles and high-born dames humbly clothed, passing through the obscure night undisguised from the people. During his sermons, the shops used to be closed, the courts of justice suspended, as if it had been a solemn festival, and with such deep attention was he followed, that among thirty thousand persons no word of interruption could be heard, and if he had not had guards round him, the people would have torn off his clothes out of devotion, to possess themselves of its fragments. Wherever he preached, quarrels were appeased, debtors were liberated, restitution was made of goods, and there were not priests sufficient to hear the confessions of the penitent people.* Some minor friars journeying, overtook a very old man returning from Rome, who told them, in course of conversation, that he had known their great preacher, St. Anthony of Padua, and that formerly he was one of twelve robbers who used to lie in wait in the woods, to plunder travellers. "We used to hear," said he, "of the wonderful preaching of this holy man, and how more than twenty thousand persons used to assemble when he preached, and we all felt great curiosity to see him. So we changed our dresses, and disguised our faces, and went to the place where he was preaching, and heard him. It seems like yesterday when I think of that hour in which we felt our hearts melting like wax before the fire at the sound of his voice. We became contrite for our wicked lives, we grieved, we wept, we lay upon the earth. Finally we took courage, addressed the saint, and confessed to him all our sins. Would that I could explain, but I cannot, how piously, how paternally, he received us. What celestial doctrine, what words of salvation he administered, what promises he gave us if we persevered in God's service, what threats he held out if like dogs we should 'return to our vomit.' Some few of us did return to their former wickedness, whom I myself saw perish shortly afterwards in horrible torments. All the rest continued holy, and made a blessed end. On me, besides other penance,

he imposed the obligation of visiting twelve times the threshold of the apostles. I am now returning with a light heart from my twelfth visit to the sacred city, hoping that in me will be fulfilled the promise of the holy man, whose doctrine, as far as human infirmity permits, I have, from that time, endeavoured always to observe."* During a mission which St. Francis Regis made in the wild and mountainous country of the Vivares, one day as he left a church, he met a troop of people, who came up and said, "Father, do not refuse us the consolation of hearing you preach; since yesterday we have travelled twelve leagues through horrible ways, in order to have this satisfaction." The holy priest, sustained by his zeal, returned into the church, and made them a pathetic exhortation. John d'Avila, surnamed the apostle of Andalusia, from the great effects which followed his preaching, was delivering a sermon in praise of St. Sebastian, at the hermitage dedicated to that martyr, on the heights above the city of Granada, when John of God first heard him. He spoke with such force of the happiness of those who suffer for Jesus Christ, that his words proved so many burning darts in the heart of this obscure stranger youth, who from that moment became incapable of ever afterwards loving temporal things.† St. Philip Neri once preached a sermon upon non-residence, before the Pope Gregory XV., which had the effect of sending thirty bishops to their respective dioceses the following day. Thomas à Kempis was surnamed the hammer, from the force with which he was able to strike the hearts of sinners. Nor did the highest ecclesiastical dignity interfere with the exercise of these wondrous powers of persuasion, as the sermons of Gregory and Leo, and innumerable other pontiffs can bear witness. After hearing Hildebrand preach, when prior of Cluny, the emperor Henry III. exclaimed that he had never heard a man preach the word of God with such boldness.‡ This was the renowned light which subsequently from the seventh Gregory illuminated the whole church. It is supposed that Dante first conceived the idea of his immortal poem from hearing this holy cardinal Hildebrand preach in Arezzo, before pope Nicholas II. on the punishment which is visited upon lost sinners.

* Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, tom. V. 1292.

† Hist. de la Vie de St. Jean de Dieu.

‡ Paul Bernried.

• Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, tom. I.

Let us now proceed to make some general observations respecting the preaching of the clergy during the middle ages, of which we have already collected sufficient examples from the pages of our ancient history. That the importance of such instruction was fully recognised, and that provision was made to supply it to the people, may be our first conclusion. As in the first ages, during the sermon the church was open to all persons, even to avowed infidels, which circumstance accounts for the silence of the fathers respecting the Christian mysteries. The great St. Francis had such a veneration for preachers who announced the Word of God, that he used to say, if he should meet a priest and an angel descended from heaven, he would first kiss the hand of the priest and then pay his reverence to the angel.

"If every discipline," says St. Augustin, "however mean and easy, requires a doctor or master that it may be learned, what more full of rash pride than to be unwilling to learn the books of the divine sacraments from their interpreters."* The church in the most solemn celebration of her greatest mysteries, reminds the faithful that their faith comes from hearing. Thus in the prose, she sings, "Docti sacris institutis ; dogma datur Christianis." Independent of supernatural causes, the superior efficacy of oral over written instruction, was shown by the great moralists of antiquity. Socrates remarks, that persons who apply to written sources, often esteem it of more importance to understand the words that are written than the things about which they are written.† Learning and philosophy in the middle ages gave no dispensation to neglect hearing the humble minister who announced in the church the mysteries of redemption. St. Bernard and Peter of Blois, and Alanus de Insulis, are expressly recorded to have preached in the schools of Paris before the masters and scholars. Sermons used to be preached in universities on all the great festivals, on the patron anniversaries of each particular school and nation, on the feasts of St. Nicholas and St. Catherine, and during Lent ; which discourses were to be suited to the capacities of the young as well as of those more advanced in philosophy.‡ The solicitude which the church evinced

that the people should be supplied with instruction in the form that was suitable to them, has not been sufficiently pointed out by modern writers. We find that in the eighth century the council of Rheims prescribed to ecclesiastics who should preach in Latin, to repeat their homilies in the Roman Rustic or Theodesque tongue, which was then better understood. The fourth canon of the council of Tours, orders that every bishop should translate his Latin sermons into the Tudesque language ; and the same injunction is repeated by the council of Arles in 851, on the ground that the homilies of the clergy may be more easily understood by all. This council prescribes that they should preach on the Catholic faith, on the eternal rewards of the just, and damnation of the wicked, on the future resurrection and last judgment.

In the eleventh century Guibert, the venerable abbot of Nogent, in his book, "*Quo Ordine Sermo fieri debeat*," which was recommended as a manual by Pope Alexander, to all preachers, insists principally upon observing a style that will be intelligible and edifying to the common people. "To the illiterate," saith he, "plain and simple things must be preached ; but to the learned a preacher may mingle things more sublime that may please their capacity, but so that at the end he may come round again to address the simple and unlearned, that these may go away instructed and consoled. To children not only milk, which is indispensable, but sometimes a crust of bread also is given, and in like manner, while simple doctrine should be preached to the vulgar, some deeper things may be added which will please both the more intellectual auditors, and excite the attention of the others, who are often attracted by what sounds new and difficult. We should preach with great moderation on the sacraments of faith, for from too profound preaching error may arise among the less intelligent ; but it is more easy and secure to treat of virtues and vices, for all our efforts should have in view the manners of the interior man, whose passions being common to all, every man will find the meaning of the preacher's words in his own heart : and no preaching seems to me more wholesome than that which shows a man to himself, and enables him to behold what passes in his own interior. To form the preacher, not alone study, but experience, and the knowledge of other men's

* *De Utilitate credendi*. 35.

† Plato *Phædrus*.

‡ Buleus, *Hist. Universit. Parisiens.* tom. II.

minds, and of his own, is necessary: his style should be in conformity with that of the Holy Scriptures, and he should be familiarly acquainted with the different senses of all the phrases and expressions used in them. Above all, the auditors must be impressed with a conviction that the preacher speaks sincerely and without any intention or desire of praise, not for the sake of money or ostentation, which more than all would offend them, but having in view only the salvation of those who hear him.* To the same effect were the directions which St. Francis gave to his friars in the year 1223. He tells them that their sermons should be for the utility and edification of the people, on vices and virtues, pains and glory. Such also was the example which he set them, as may be witnessed in his preaching in 1219, before the immense assembly when St. Dominick and Cardinal Hugolinus were present, when his theme was thus delivered:—

*"Magna promissimus; majora promissa sunt nobis:
Servemus hæc; adspiremus ad illa.
Voluptas brevis; poena perpetua.
Modica passio; gloria infinita.
Mukorum vocatio; paucorum electio.
Omnium retributio."*

"We must preach," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "justice to the unjust, truth to the ignorant, and salvation to the impious." It is clear from what we have seen that the solicitude of the Church was admirably served by the indefatigable zeal of her ministers. The blessed James Picinus, a minor friar, whose preaching was celebrated through Italy, discharged that office with such obedience, that during forty-seven years he preached almost every day to the people, and occasionally in three or four places on one day, and yet such was the austerity of his life, that he passed the greatest part of the night in meditation, after singing the divine office with the brethren.† St. Vincent Ferrier preached to the people every day, as did also St. Bernardine of Sienna, till within a few days of his death. On the Friday before the Ascension, preaching in the old ducal town of Phalacrina, Bernardine implored his auditors to pray for his happy passage, and it was immediately after this last most sweet discourse, which had dissolved

the multitude in tears, that he was seized with fever. Then he told his companions that he had finished his sermons, and that he was going to leave his bones in the city of Aquilana. Thither he went in great weakness and suffering, but refreshed with celestial visions. On the Sunday he entered that city amidst the greatest devotion and congratulations of the people. The magistrates and nobles sent him the best physicians; but nothing could arrest the disease. At Nones on the vigil of the Ascension, he expired with a smile while the brethren were singing that antiphon at vespers, "Pater, manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus."*

Bernardine, of Monte Felto, when at Sienna, used to preach three times each day. He used to repair to cities infected with the plague, and when the magistrates desired him to desist lest such assemblies might increase the evil, he would reply, that the word of the Lord, and not herbs and medicines, would save the perishing people. It was a common remark that those who went to his sermons were never or rarely attacked.† In 1481 he preached at Venice in the square of St. Mark, there being no church large enough, every day from Palm Sunday till the octave of the Resurrection. This holy friar, in proportion as his strength failed, on the approach of death, only preached with the greater fervency. Shortly after his arrival at Pavia, the people observing his weakness, and that he could not walk without a staff, entreated that he would repose at least for three days. Even when the fever increased he was unwilling to remain in bed, but at the door of his chamber in his convent of St. James, which adjoined the church, he received the chief men and magistrates of the city, and exhorted them to live well. To the last he continued to join in the office, and to administer salutary instruction, till, amidst the psalmody of the brethren, without any sign of perturbation, with a placid and serene countenance, his spirit passed at the tenth hour of the night on the vigil of St. Michael.‡

We have seen how the fervour and assiduity of the people corresponded with the solicitude of the church, and of her ministers. It was a common precaution of all the great preachers of the middle ages, to travel by night, lest their departure should be prevented. St. Vincent Ferrier

* Guiberti Abb. Novig. Lib. Quo Ordine Ser-mo fieri debeat.

† Ann. Min. tom. IX.

* Ann. Min. tom. XI.

† Id. tom. XIV.

‡ Id. tom. XV.

shortly before his death, feeling a great anxiety to return to Spain in order to die there, set out from Vannes mounted on an ass at midnight, and for the same reason as obliged the Italian preachers to choose that hour for beginning their journeys.* That solicitude was also seconded by the zeal of persons in civil authority, who generally seemed to have no object so much at heart as the religious instruction of the people. We read of the prefect of the citadel of Peschara, on the lake of Garda, a noble man of the Vitturina family, procuring, in 1471, Bernardine Feltrensis to preach frequently to the soldiers of the garrison.† Such solicitude would be little in harmony with the spirit of later times. Æneas was a celebrated preacher in the days of Charles the Bald. "Whoever touched the threshold of the palace," exclaims his contemporary, the Archbishop of Sens, "to whom the labour of Æneas and his fervour in divine things did not appear?"‡

Notwithstanding the ardour for preaching which distinguished the religious innovators, the result even in regard to the quantity of instruction supplied, was very contrary to what the generality of modern readers suppose. In fact it was not so easy to find a substitute for the steady principle of faith, and the zeal of men of the interior life truly devoted without any personal ambition. The chiefs of the new doctrine were, indeed, indefatigable men, and possessed of an energy and an activity which seems almost incredible. There were, as Burton at length confesses, "superstition often in hearing of sermons, bitter contentions, invectives, persecutions, strange conceits, besides diversity of opinions, schisms, and factions."§ At Geneva ministers were sent to the villages to compel the rustics to come to the preaching. Nevertheless, upon the whole the ministers were deficient even in the very quality which they seemed to prefer to every other; for while a few chiefs were reaping laurels by their eloquence, the inferior preachers lapsed into supine indifference, insomuch that Strype says that "a thousand pulpits in England were covered with dust. Some had not had four sermons in fifteen or sixteen years, since friars left their limitation, and few of those," he adds, "were worthy the name of sermons."|| In comparison

of Catholic ages the contrast continued to latter times almost equally striking, so that the anglican bishop of Llandaff, speaking of Wesley, confessed lately in a sermon at Abergavenny, that he found thousands of his countrymen, though nominally Christians, yet as ignorant as heathens, "and in too many instances, it is useless," he added, "to conceal or disguise the fact, ignorant either through the inattention of government in not providing for increased numbers, or through the carelessness and neglect of those whom the national church had appointed to be their pastors." Again, it must be observed that the clergy of the middle ages taught as men having authority, and not like those who look to the civil government, or to national institutions, or to any human source, for their advancement or direction. "Docendus est populus, non sequendus," is the maxim of the canons,* which admitted of no exception in favour of kings or statesmen, as may be witnessed in the epistle of St. Ambrose, in which he refuses to contend with Auxentius the Arian bishop, in the imperial consistory, where the emperor was to be the judge. He appeals to the former imperial rescript, which declared that in matters of faith no one should judge who was not of the ecclesiastical order, and competent by gift and authority, which was to say that priests alone should judge of priests. "When was it ever heard," he asks, "that laics might judge a bishop, or that a priest might concede to others what was entrusted to him by God? On the contrary it is for bishops to judge between Christian emperors, not for emperors to judge between bishops. Ambrose is not of such importance, that for his sake the priesthood should fall to the ground. The life of one man is not of such consequence as the dignity of all priests. If a matter is to be treated upon, I have learned to treat in the church. If we are to confer concerning the faith, it must be in a conference of priests. If Auxentius should appeal to the Synod, that he may dispute about the faith, it is not just that so many bishops should be fatigued for the sake of one, who even if he were an angel from heaven, ought not to be preferred to the peace of the church; therefore, O emperor, graciously receive my answer, that to the consistory I cannot come. I have not learned to stand up in the consistory, and within

* Lobineau, Hist. de Bret. Lib. IX.

† Annal. Minorum, Vol. XIII.

‡ Buleus, Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. 1.

§ Book III. 4. || Strype, II. 15.

* Iyonis Carnot. Decret. Pars. XVI. 14.

† Epist. Lib. V. 32.

the palace, I who neither inquire nor have known the secrets of the palace, cannot contend."*

St. Francis preaching at Spoleto in the public square, began his sermon with these words, "Angeli, homines, dæmones." This, you say, would be deemed extraordinary at present. True, and some learned critics at the time who stood in the crowd, thought it rash, but when has an academic oration produced the effects which followed that sermon, when a whole city from being torn with dissensions and enmities, was re-united in love, and when a crowd of sanguinary nobles were transformed into pacific and blessed men! When Ferrara was besieged by the Venetians, in 1483, the inhabitants invited Bernardine of Monte Feltro to preach to them. At the great peril of his life, he was introduced into the city, and delivered sermons every day in the cathedral against the licence of the citizens, the rapine of soldiers, and all kinds of injustice usual in war. In one sermon, deploring the vices of the people, and describing the wrath of God which was hanging over them, the whole multitude began to implore the divine mercy with tears. The friar wept also, but then changing his tone, exclaimed, "O Ferrara, because it repenteth thee to have sinned, it pleaseth God to have mercy on thee. Thou shalt be delivered from this siege, and restored to thy former felicity, but beware of returning to sin, lest God should compensate the delay by the gravity of his doom."† The clergy, moreover, taught as persons who had faith in their own doctrines, and not like men who seem ever ready to admit that they defend only a cause of secondary importance, and to concede to every sophist who advances a principle at variance with what they teach. Their tone in general was rather that of St. Augustin, where he argues against those who said that ecclesiastical celibacy would injure population and shorten the duration of the world, and begins by exclaiming, "Would to God that all were so determined with a pure heart, a right conscience, and with faith, and the duration of this world would be shortened,"‡ a boldness for which his opponents were but little prepared. Neither did they profess to unfold new views in theology, or to preach as from themselves. The sermon which S. Gall preached in Constance on the entrance of the bishop may be read in the Bibliotheca

Patrum. Hildefons von Arx observes, "that it is historical, and wholly in the style of the apostles, relating all the chief events of revelation from the creation of the world to that time,"* which was the general manner of preaching during the middle ages, as may be proved from all ancient collections. Here it must be confessed, the religious innovators at all times had the advantage of them, though Fuller complains that "aged pastors in consequence were justled out of respect by young preachers, not having half their age, nor a quarter of their learning and religion. "English Athenians," saith he, "are all for novelties, new sects, new schisms, new doctrines, new disciplines, new prayers, new preachers."† The Catholic clergy had no such inducements to offer, but as St. Augustin says, "What they found in the church they held; what they learned they taught; what they received from the fathers, they delivered to sons."‡ Hence the person of the preacher entered for little into the influence of the ecclesiastical instructions. The religious innovators seem to have paid but slight attention to the denouncement of woe against him who putteth his hope in man.§ With them the inquiries were unremitting respecting who was the best preacher, who had the most eloquent delivery, or the soundest doctrine; but in the Catholic Church the instructions of the clergy assumed a totally different character, and as they emanated from a higher source, so was the instrument of their communication generally lost sight of. Even of the sacraments a wicked priest hindered not the grace, which article of faith St. Anselm illustrates by remarking that Joseph sought and received the body of Jesus from Pilate who was an infidel.|| "Non exhorreat columba ministerium malorum," says St. Augustin; much less was simplicity an obstacle.¶ In general whoever was thought to lead the holiest life was chosen for the preacher. The blessed Gandulphus de Benasco, of Milan, in the year 1260, being grieved at hearing frequently his own praises, fled from his convent with one companion and passed into Sicily, where he took up his abode on a wild mountain near Politum. His manner of life becoming known, the chief inhabitants of that town requested that he would

* Epist. Lib. V. 32.

† Ann. Minorum, tom. XIV.

‡ De bono Conjug. cap. 10.

* Geschichte des Kantons, St. Gallen. I. 18.

† Fuller's Thoughts, 208.

‡ St. August. Lib. II. cont. Julianum.

§ Jerem. xvii. 5. || Elucidarium, Lib. I. c. 30.

¶ Supra Joan. tom. V.

preach the Lent sermons, which he did, preferring the general utility to his own quiet. On the fourth feria of holy week he predicted to the people that he spoke to them for the last time, and in fact while returning that day to the hospice his strength failed him, and on holy Saturday he slept in the Lord, when all the clergy and people carried his sacred body with great solemnity to the mother church, and then buried him in the humble spot which he had pointed out to them.* Thus a poor stranger was preferred by the people, and permitted without envy by the local clergy to discharge the most honourable function. The voice which announced the Word of God was listened to as something different from a human voice, and the authority of each preacher clad in the sacred vestments was felt to be the same. That in primitive times, when somewhat of the heathen spirit of inquiry and of curiosity must have still influenced the minds of men, there was less consistency of manners, and feeling in this respect than during the middle ages, may be inferred from the reproof of St. Ambrose. "I have found out, brethren," saith he, "that during my absence so few of you come to the church as if on my going away you had gone with me, and when I am drawn off by necessities, the same necessity compelled you also to go. So we are both alike absent from the house of God; I from necessity, and you from choice. Do you not know that though I am absent from the church, Christ who is every where is not absent from it? Brother, you come to the church. There you do not find the bishop, but if you come faithfully you will find there the Bishop of bishops, the Saviour. For Christians who go to the church only when the bishop is present, seem to go not so much for the sake of God as of man, not to fulfil the office of a Christian who fears, but the service of an obsequious friend. But why do I reprove you when you can put me to silence with one word. For I see that clerks are more negligent than you, and how can I correct sons when I am not able to amend brethren; or with what confidence can I be angry with laymen, when I am shamed by my fellow-labourers? I speak not of all, certainly there are some devout and others negligent. I name no one. Let each one's conscience answer."†

The generality of modern French writers—no English authors condescend as yet to

investigate such questions—do not seem to suppose that there could have been any preacher of correct taste and genuine eloquence before the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. If I understand the Abbe Gouget aright, he was of opinion that until that period there was nothing evinced but bad taste and ignorance in the composition of sermons. Certainly, the preachers of the middle age, in composing or publishing sermons, had other views besides those of literary renown. If Jerome, a hermit of Camaldoli and apostle of Lithuania, who fled from Prague his native city, when his name became associated with the crimes and errors of faithless men, published sermons for Lent, and for the festivals of the saints, and for all Sundays, which he had preached in Poland before King Vladislaus and his knights, he declares that his motive was that the reader might pray for him.* These sermons, which were in the library of the desert of Camaldoli, were entitled, "A Lent of Salvation," "Examples of Eternal Salvation," and "Lines of Eternal Salvation;" titles which alone are enough to prove how little he was actuated by views of literary vanity. Nevertheless we have already had sufficient evidence to show the groundlessness of such limitations, and, indeed, it may be much doubted, whether a familiar acquaintance with the ecclesiastical discourses of the middle ages, be the best preparation for enjoying the magnificent prose of Bossuet, or of Massillon, of which the artificial and perhaps sometimes ostentatious tone, would induce one to look back with anything but contempt upon the plain, majestic, unaffected style of the ancient preachers.

Pignotti, after observing the great eloquence which characterizes the sermons of the friar Savonarola, adds, "I hesitate not to affirm that some of his sermons are preferable to the false eloquence made use of by many modern sacred orators, in whom the truths of the Gospel, instead of being adorned with decent attire, are on the contrary disguised in a swollen and far-fetched style, wherein we discover the badly-tempered colours of poetry, without the inspiration it ought to display."†

"Compare," says a French historian, "the sacred eloquence of the sixth century to that of the modern pulpit, even in the seventeenth century. Open the modern sermons, they have evidently more of a literary than of a practical character. The

* Wadding, An. IV. 1260.

† Sermon. LXXXIII.

* Annal. Camaldol. Lib. LVIII.

† Hist. of Tuscany, III. chap. 10.

orator aspires rather to beauty of language, to the intellectual satisfaction of his hearers, than to act upon their souls, and produce real and efficacious conversion. Nothing of this kind, nothing literary appears in the sermons of those ages; no desire of speaking well, of combining images and ideas with art. The orator goes to the fact, does not fear repetitions, familiarity, nor even vulgarity; he speaks for a short time, but he recommences every morning. It is not sacred eloquence, it is religious power."

It had been remarked in the middle ages, that Christ gives no full comments or continued discourse, but as Demetrius, the rhetorician, phrases it, speaks oft in monosyllables, like a master scattering the heavenly grain of his doctrine as pearls here and there. This character belongs to the instructions of the clergy of that epoch. There is no study of effect observable in them, although they feed on thoughts that voluntarily move harmonious numbers; and when there is occasion to awe brute violence, their words are like those of Æchylus, few, but having brows and crests, and clothed in terror. There are even sermons wholly in verse of the thirteenth century, which the Benedictines believe to have been delivered from the pulpit. In the great Franciscan and Dominican preachers we have no verbose declamations, or the ingenious eloquence of a speculative discourse; but we are struck with the solemn majesty of their apostolic style, so imbued with the sense of the holy Scriptures, and with the sentences of sacred tradition. They are quick, sententious, impressive, and even learned. The blessed Cherubin of Spoleto, never or rarely preached without a long previous study of what he was to say. Being asked by Cardinal Sabello, the legate of Umbria, why he spent so much time in preparation, after having had such long experience, the holy friar replied, "Though my life has been spent in preaching, yet I never dare to preach without spending previously at least seven hours in study of the holy Scriptures, and in meditation."* Bernardine of Monte Feltro, used to say mass before sunrise, that he might have time to meditate on what he was to preach that day. St. Bernardine of Sienna must have had the whole Bible by heart, to judge from the style of his discourses. The great mysteries of salvation are the general theme of their instruction. Blessed Guido de Spathis, a most fervent and efficacious

preacher of the fourteenth century, used always to hold a great nail in his hand when addressing the people, to keep constantly in his mind the memory of the Passion of Christ. This nail is still preserved in the convent of the Minors at Bologna, where he is represented holding it in his hand, with an inscription which attests the multitudes of sinners whom he turned to the wisdom of the just.

"Angelicum virum recole per omnia mirum,
Publicas convertens, publicanosque et sævientes.
Hunc Deus elegit, qui corda saxea fregit."†

Bernardine of Monte Feltro, used to distribute papers on which the name of Jesus was written, which the devout multitude received with eagerness from his hand.

Manzoni remarks, that among the many inconveniences of the oratorical spirit, by which it is in opposition with the logical and moral spirit, one of the most common and most sensible is, that it exaggerates the good or evil of a thing, forgetting the connexion that it has with something else. So that it tends to weaken or even to destroy a complication of truths, from a wish to overstrain one, and consequently even destroys this one. This is the spirit of those who, wishing to magnify some one or other religious practice, ascribe undue power to it; and though it is true that in abandoning themselves to this miserable intemperance of mind, they do not fail at other times to administer correctives, the evil remains without being remedied, and all their other instruction becomes incombinate with this particular doctrine. From this defect the preachers of the middle age are wholly free. Their scholastic style gained in precision what it lost in rhetorical effect. Their eloquence was not, indeed, that kind for which men formerly raised to orators golden statues in the temple of the Pythian Apollo. It did not indicate that rhetorical skill which Socrates compared to cookery, or to any other art of flattery;† but it was not, therefore, found powerless and inefficient in converting men to justice.

A certain preacher at Puy complained to father John Filleau, provincial of the Jesuits, saying, that the sermons which St. Francis Regis was then delivering, were not composed with sufficient art, and that he did not keep up the dignity which should attend the word of God. The provincial took him to the church when the saint was to preach.

* Ann. Minorum, tom XIV.

* Ann. Minorum, tom. VII.
† Plat. Gorgias.

During the sermon the provincial wept, and on going out said, "Would to God that all might preach with this divine unction. Let us leave the holy man to speak with his apostolic simplicity; the finger of God is here."

Amazed at the reformation of manners which attended the preaching of St. Francis of Assisium, learned men attempted to discover by what arts he attained such prodigious success, "but let the curious lovers of mundane eloquence know," says a contemporary, "that his school was the Gospel, and his master Christ."

Maffeus Veggius speaks of the preaching of St. Bernardine, and cries, "Who can describe the grace and dignity of his pronunciation, the sweetness and gravity of his style! Nature alone had taught him the perfection of the highest art of eloquence. On solemn days, when the multitude is composed of all sorts of people, his style was full of variety, in order that there might be somewhat to edify all, and as he was naturally cheerful, he often mixed pleasant with grave things. With all this, his learning was prodigious, and his knowledge of the evangelic doctrine profound. Moreover, he had a knowledge of many things, and experience of various manners, for, as he had visited all the cities of Italy, he knew the peculiar faults of each, and could prescribe the proper remedy; but in reprehending vices, he spared men, and always spoke with such consummate prudence, lest the light vulgar should be excited by him, so that he never uttered a word that could give scandal; and, indeed, he used to say, that from the time when he first began to preach, he never uttered a word excepting with the intention of honouring and praising God." I can easily conceive the enthusiasm of his hearers, when I find that, even to a reader, his sermons furnish a study that is full of instruction and delight. Their short sentences, pregnant with subtle and profound truths, keep the attention constantly alive. They not only charm and edify, they surprise each moment, and yield a pleasure ever new and inexhaustible.

That eloquence should be studied expressly for the religious instruction of the people, was shown by Raban Maur in his Institutes of Clerks. "Who would dare to say," he asks, "that virtue should be powerless in its defenders? That they who endeavour to persuade false things, should know how to render their hearers benevolent, intent, and docile, but that

these should not know? That the one should be able to relate false things briefly, clearly, and plausibly, and that the other should so mention true things, that it would be tedious to hear, difficult to understand, and, lastly, impossible to believe them? That the one retaining the minds of their hearers in error or impelling them to it, should be able by speaking to terrify, to sadden, to exhilarate, and ardently to exhort, while the others, on the side of truth, should be slow, frigid, and soporiferous? "Quis ita desipiat, ut hoc sapiat?"* "Three things," says Hugo of St. Victor, "are required in a preacher. Sanctity of conversation, perfection of science, and eloquence to win grace, that his discourse may be holy, prudent, and noble."†

As in early times,‡ it was common during the middle ages to see short-hand writers taking down notes of the sermons of preachers.§ Those of Savanorola used to be printed the day after they were pronounced, and sent in detached sheets to all parts of Italy. Certainly such passages and customs imply both a sense of the importance and great ability in the exercise of sacred eloquence. Nevertheless, its force was in simplicity and sanctity.

The Bernardines, the Vincent Ferriers, the Suffrens, and generally in all ages of the church, the preachers who excited the greatest movement, were humble men, who desired no other eloquence but that of sincerity, no other applause but tears, no other testimony but conversions. Jerome, a Stupha of the convent of St. Saviour at Florence, used to study his style in hermitages, in woods, and desert places, nor had he any books excepting some fragments of the Scriptures; but no one, either learned or unlearned, was ever weary of hearing him, though he sometimes preached for two or three hours, and no church was large enough to contain the multitude that flocked to hear his sermons. In the lent of 1459, he preached in the cathedral, and at the same time Antonio Aretinus, a doctor of Paris, and most illustrious, used to preach in the Sancta Croce with the friars. A friend of the latter expressed his astonishment to him, that the same effects were not produced by his sermons, as by those of

* Rabani Mauri De Institutione Clericorum, Lib. III. c. 19.

† Hugo Vict. Eruditionis Theolog. ex Miscel. Lib. IV. tit. 64.

‡ F. B. Ferrarius de veterum Christianorum Concionibus.

§ Journal de Henry IV. 1600. 8 Fev.

frar Jerome. "Those who return from hearing Jerome," said he, "are changed into other men; they appear devout in manner, contrite in heart, with a meditative countenance, not talking to one another, but thinking how they may perform what they have heard, amend their lives, make restitution, and bid adieu to vanities. They who hear you depart joyous and talkative, not seeing how they may correct their ways, but what they may note in you; and like morose censors, they either commend your skill in speaking, or blame what you may have uttered indiscreetly." Aretinus replied as follows: "I will tell you sincerely, nor will I deny my own poverty nor his virtues. What I find in books, I bring forth without fervour, nor do I kindle those flames in myself which I ought to excite in others. I am a coal, but almost extinct. How should I kindle dry wood? but that poor and simple man is all burning, and the sparks of his ardent charity easily kindle to a flame the cold fuel." Shortly after, this learned man, imitating the virtues of Jerome, passed to the Minors, and then, having laid aside the vain flowers of rhetoric, preached not in the words of human wisdom, but in the manifestation of virtue.

When Jerome preached at Milan and at Padua, the doctors and masters ceased their lectures, that the scholars might hear him. "Go," they used to say, "hear the preacher of the best sentences but of the worst rhetoric. Gather the fruit and neglect the leaves." When he first preached at Padua, two of the most celebrated preachers of Italy were then delivering sermons, Alexander a Saxoferrata, an Augustian hermit, and Nicolas Spinelli, a Florentine, but the greatest crowds followed the humble Jerome. The next year, he was chosen in preference to many learned men, to preach on Good Friday, in the church of St. Paul, in presence of the duke and senate, who, after the sermon, followed him with the utmost reverence to his convent.*

Frequently these preachers availed themselves of accidental interruptions, to throw in impressive words. Thus Herculanus de Piagale, a Minor friar, preaching on the Passion, was interrupted by the lamentations of the weeping multitude. During that solemn pause, a female voice was heard exclaiming from the crowd, "Enough, enough, Herculanus, no more weeping."

* Ann. Minerum, tom. XIII.

"Yea, but more," he replied, "Christ shed more blood for us than we have tears."*

The academic style was, indeed, excluded by the very circumstances of locality, for it must be remembered that vast as were the churches of the middle ages, it was nevertheless often necessary to preach in the open air to satisfy the multitude of auditors. There was no association of ideas formerly between sermons and velvet cushions. Pope Urban the Second being at Tours, residing at Marmonier, preached on the banks, of the Loire. We find St. Francis, on one occasion, preaching on the sea-shore near Cajeta. Again, at the great tournament and games of St. Leo, given by the count of Monte Feltro, it was from a wall that he preached the memorable sermon which moved Count Orlandus Catanus to give him the mountain of Alvernia. Bernardine of Monte Feltro, preaching near Pantanelli, on the nativity of the Blessed Virgin, three thousand persons assembling to hear him from the neighbouring towns, in a wood adjoining the Franciscan convent, delivered his sermon from a pulpit formed with the boughs of trees. We find stone pulpits in public squares, and even amidst groves and gardens, from which holy men discoursed to the people. Many of these, like that in the gardens of the abbey of Shrewsbury, are of exquisite beauty. Adam Rufus, a Franciscan in Italy, in 1234, preached in a vast deserted and roofless church; and holy confessors in Ireland, preached during the later times of persecution, amidst the ruined walls of monasteries, on islands in the lakes, and on sea-beaten rocks along the stormy shore. That style was also often excluded by the very character of the men. Ruffinus, the humble and timid disciple of St. Francis, excused himself from preaching, by alleging his simplicity, till he was moved by holy obedience to consent. "Alas!" said he, to himself, "how can I preach, I am deficient in utterance? what can I say? Well, I will repeat a few plain useful words, above all, these, 'put away the evil and do good.'" So, repeating these to himself, he hastened to the spot, and addressed the multitude "Dearest brethren, fly the world. Sir not, if you would escape the pains of hell love God above all things, and your neighbour as yourselves. In a word, put away the good and do evil, for the kingdom of God is near." At these transposed words

* Ann. Minorum, tom. XII.

the people began to laugh, but Francis, stepping forth, supplied an admirable correction, which made error become a subtle and profound truth. "Men and brethren," said he, "do you laugh at the words of your Ruffinus, a good and candid man, and do you ridicule his simplicity? Rightly he advised you to put away the good and to do evil. The good which you think of all things best, are human consolations and bodily delights, and these are to be laid aside; but the evil, which is the greatest among worldly men, is to do penance for sins, and to take up the cross daily, and this is the evil which your fellow-citizen desires you to do; he adviseth you to put away carnal delights, to chastise your bodies, and to cease from sin, because the kingdom of God is nigh." At these words the laughter was changed into tears, and in that multitude there was not one whom the words of the man of God did not fill with amaze, and cause to weep abundantly.*

St. Bernardine of Sienna, in the height of his celebrity used to think that he was only fit to preach in small rustic towns; and, at the end of his sermons in great cities, when the people used to follow him with every expression of honour, he would appear so sad and dejected that one might suppose it was some prisoner that men were leading to execution.† Bernardine of Monte Feltro, who traversed Italy so often in all directions, would always travel on foot, through snow or rain, over rock or marsh. At the town of Trajadi, a sumptuous repast was provided for him after his sermon. He ordered it to be distributed to the poor, and then going without the town, sat down under a tree and made his repast of fruits and bread.

Let it be observed, at the same time, that the negligence and simplicity of the ancient style was such as would have been suggested by art, rather than the result of inability. Raban Maur left admirable rules for the composition of sermons, and showed the necessity of avoiding a foolish and inflated rhetoric. He remarks that those who have most poverty in themselves, are the slowest to take advantage of the rich eloquence of the holy Scriptures; that many things should be delivered in a humble, gentle, and temperate strain, that, above all things, the preacher should use words that are easily understood by the people, and he asks, "Of what use is it to

have a golden key, if it cannot open what we want? Or what objection can one have to a wooden key, if it can do this, since we only desire to open what is shut? To the grandest points there should," he observes, "be always a temperate beginning; and it is even in the power of a preacher really eloquent, to treat in a humble and moderate style, the very subjects which may be delivered in a grand and magnificent manner, that by means of this dark veil they may be made to appear still more luminous."* "In preaching, use a simple style," says St. Vincentius, "and a domestic language, to declare particular acts. Use familiar examples, and let all your words seem to come from your mind, not from pride, but rather from the bowels of charity and paternal piety. A general discourse upon virtues and vices moves the hearers but little."†

"As we pity," says Raban Maur, "one that hath a beautiful body with a deformed soul, more than if he had also a deformed body, so when trivial or deformed things are delivered with eloquence, they are more calculated to excite disgust than if they had been spoken in common language."‡ In conformity with this principle the preachers of the middle ages were often Socratic in their style, or even as Alcibiades would say, Silenic. One might sometimes say of them what the disciple remarks of Socrates, that when one hears their discourses, at first they would seem ridiculous, being enveloped in a tissue of such names and words as might be compared to the skin of some insolent satyr; for they speak of asses carrying pack-saddles, and kettle-menders, and cobblers, and tanners, and always with the aid of such words they seem to say the same things, so that every inexperienced and foolish man would laugh at their discourses; but when any one shall see them as it were opened, and view their interior, he will be convinced in the first place that their words are full of sense, and afterwards that they are most divine, having many images of virtue within them, and tending to the greatest part, or rather to the whole of what should be the object of contemplation to whoever would be a noble and just man.§ Nevertheless, there is no affectation of negligence discernible in the

* Rabani Mauri De Institutione Clericorum, Lib. III. cap. 25.

† Tract. S. Vincentii de Vita Spiritualis cap. de modo prædicandi.

‡ Id. III. 35.

§ Plato Conviv.

* Wadding IV.

+ Wadding, tom. X.

ancient preachers. St. Chrysostom for the sake of the language is related to have studied Aristophanes. St. Avitus, archbishop of Vienne, writes to Viventius the rhetorician, and says, "I have heard that in the homily which I lately delivered to the people of Lyons, on the dedication of the Basilica, you say that I committed a barbarism, and thus was guilty of a fault in a public discourse. I confess that may have happened, especially to me, for if in greener years I had made any proficiency in the study of letters, 'Omnia fert ætas.' They say that you blame me because I made the middle syllable of *potitur* long, not following Virgil, who made it short, saying *vi potitur*;* but that is pardonable in a poem, and we find that Virgil, has often so presumed in his works, content to commit a barbarism and to invert the nature of syllables contrary to the laws of art, when necessity requires it. As where he says, 'Non erimus regno indecores,† or 'fervere Leucatem,‡ or that

'Namque ut supremam falsa inter gaudia noctem
Egerimus.'§

Virgil used a poetic licence in shortening the middle syllable of *potitur*, which is necessarily long." After some grammatical discussion, he concludes by admonishing this orator to beware in future how he passed such judgments. "Quod amicum strahere magis studiis quam detrudere, et oratorem eloqui potius quam obloqui decet."¶ St. Jerome had remarked that the Arians in ordaining men did not so much require them to be imbued with the sense of the Holy Scriptures, as that they might be able to please the ears of the people with the flowers of declamation. "Hence it was," he said, "that the Arian heresy employed more the wisdom of the world."¶

St. Gregory Nazianzen severely condemned those preachers who transferred the eloquence and pronunciation of the theatre to the chair of evangelic truth.** If on the one hand, laymen during the middle ages knew that it was a grievous fault to criticise a preacher, on the other the clergy when discourse was held, did not stand forth before them as players, delivering artful declamation with the tone and action of tragedians: they were impassioned, earnest and eloquent, but it

was a passion totally removed from all effeminate desire to draw tears, an earnestness which was not noisy and affected; an eloquence which had nothing in common with the tricks of a scenic representation. The awful severity of truth little accorded with unmanly fondness for dwelling on the detail of human sufferings, and what was bad taste in a poet like Euripides, would have sounded like profanation from the lips of one who was to announce the doctrines of the cross and the fact of the eternal existence. It is clear, too, that the preachers of these times addressed themselves to the understanding and passions, but not merely to the ears of men: for their sermons lose nothing by being read, and that also after a lapse of eight hundred years. The effect was produced by words full of sense, not by a prolongation of sounds which so far from moving the passions religiously of an intellectual audience, would wound and exasperate them. Dante, indeed, blames the unwarranted conceits of some preachers of his time in Florence, who were addicted to vulgar familiarity, and the desire of jests and gibes; but even when accusing these of neglecting the book of God, he speaks of the favour which he wins for himself who meekly clings to it. The holy fathers sometimes, though indeed most rarely, adopted a light and facetious style in exposing the errors of the heathen superstition; as when St. Augustin says, "In the plague they must bring Æsculapius from Epidaurus to help Rome, since Jove, the king of all, who had been seated for a long time in the capitol, having spent his youth in licentious pleasures, had, perhaps, never leisure to study medicine."* The pleasantry or familiarity of the preachers of the middle age was at all events better than empty declamation and the affected intonation of words signifying nothing. It had even an ardour of philosophy about it, as may be witnessed in the sermons of brother John of Rochetaillée, a learned and holy friar of the fourteenth century, whose pleasant apologues reminded proud and worldly ecclesiastics that God was the best possession.†

Bernardine of Monte Feltro, who used to say pleasantly that he was of the illustrious house of Piccolomini, alluding to his stature, which obtained for him the surname of *Parvulus*, introduced the same

* Æn. III. + VII.

§ Æn. VI.

¶ Adv. Lucifer.

‡ VIII.

¶ Epist. 41.

** Orat. XXVII.

* De Civ. Dei, III. 17.

† Paradis. Hist. de Lyon, lib. II. 86.

idea into the affecting sermon which he preached on entering Pavia, where fortelling his own death, and apostrophising himself, he said, "A great sea is shortly to be passed, deeper for those to whom the care of others has been committed, and how much more then for me who am so little? but I will keep near the shore." But what is most of all striking in the sermons of the middle age is their mild and persuasive tone, that artless sweetness which no affectation could attain to, and which can hardly fail even at this distance and under circumstances of society so changed from the time when they were first delivered, to act with religious power on the hearts of all who hear them. In them breathes the gentle spirit of moving words. "Testor Jesum," cries the monk John, speaking of his master St. Odo II., abbot of Cluni, and of his instructions, "Testor Jesum, quia ex ore hominis numquam audiui tantam dulcedinem sermonis."* Seldom do these orators aspire to cast forth lightning and thunder like Pericles, but they generally announce their majestic lessons and develope their innocent thoughts in that meek and soothing style which reminds one of Cicero's expression, when he said that his eloquence began canescere. It was not what Quintillian calls "*circulatoriam volubilitatem*;" it was a style sober but splendid, and full of majesty; condensed and abounding in sense as in the opening lines of Lewis of Grenada's sinner's guide, which never grovels, but pursues its even way, never beats the air, but like an oracular voice impresses the ear with reverence: nothing graver, more prudent, more simple, more studious of truth and virtue: soft and full of refreshing lustre, like the dew of heaven, these chaste and holy thoughts descended into the very deepest recesses of the human heart. True, they were humble, and often unlearned men, but they were imbued with the science of the sacred Scriptures; they knew the psalms, they knew sentences of the fathers, they knew decrees of the Church, they knew traditions of wisdom, they knew secrets of grace, they knew the lives, they knew the death of the just. If they were not orators after the manner of Greece and Rome, their high conception soared beyond the mark of mortals; if at times they added things so profound that we cannot follow them, when the flight of

holy transport had so spent its rage that nearer to the level of our thought the speech descended, the sounds that issued were of justice and mercy, words like those of angels worthy of sacred silence to be heard. Their discourse, as Bernardine of Sienna requires, was vivifying to the dead, illuminative to the blind, inflammatory to the frigid, nutritive to the hungry, defensive to the tempted; it softened the obdurate, it consoled the despairing heart. There arose from it purity to the defiled, health to the diseased, strength to the weak, and glory to those who sought salvation. It is not derogatory to almighty grace, nor injurious to the divine word, to acknowledge that when excited even by the natural love of truth and justice, the tongue of man can play upon the heart with wondrous skill, and draw from it tones of ineffable sweetness. Might not one suppose that the young Athenian in Plato was describing a saint Eligius or Edmund, or holy preacher of living justice, when speaking of his master, he says, "Truly, when we hear any other orator, however admirable, delivering other discourses, it may be said in a word that we take no interest in him; but when any one hears you, or hears some other person repeating your words, however mean that person may be, whether it be a woman or a man, or a youth who hears them, we are struck, and as it were led captive. Sooth, as for myself, whenever I hear him my heart leaps more than that of the Corybantes, and my tears burst forth by the force of his words; and I see many others who are affected in the same way; but after hearing Pericles and other great orators, I am indeed of opinion that they speak well; but I am never moved in this way, neither is my soul troubled nor affected with pain as if enslaved; but by this man I am thus affected, and that to such a degree that I am forced to believe that to be as I am is not to be: I know also perfectly, that if ever I lend my ears to him I shall be unable to resist, but must suffer these things; for he compels me to confess that wanting much I still neglect myself while I attend to the affairs of the Athenians. Therefore do I fly from him, stopping my ears, as if from the syrens, that I may not grow old in attending to him. And, moreover, it is only in his presence that I am susceptible of shame; for I know well that I shall not be able to persuade myself but that I ought to do what he desires me; but yet when I go away I am subdued

* Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 21.

through respect to the multitude. Therefore I run away from him and I avoid him, and whenever I see him I feel ashamed, and oftentimes I would that he were no longer living among men; though if this were to happen I know well that I should grieve still more, so that I do not know how to act with regard to this man.* From many passages in the writings of Plato, it is easy to gain some insight into mysteries concerning the instructions and influence of the Christian teachers. If the voice of natural justice could work so upon the feelings of a generous youth, what must be the impressions produced by the announcement of the everlasting Gospel? "I myself," says an ancient author, "was a witness of a preacher whose writings sufficiently evince the fervour of his zeal, who for the purpose of preaching during the five or six years that he preached in Italy, never studied in any other book but that of the passion of Jesus Christ. Seven years past, when I was in a convent of our order named Fonte-Palombe, forty miles from Rome, this venerable and devout man, on the night of the stigmata of St. Francis, was sought for in a grotto which was within the enclosures of the convent, that he might come and preach before the brethren, who were waiting in the church after matins. Freely the sage, though wrapped in musings high, assumed the teacher's part, and mild began. Then without having made any preparation, excepting what he had in his solitary communion with God, he spake such high things with such an extraordinary fervour, that I felt quite out of myself. In truth, being in the number of thirty monks, there was not one who did not shed hot tears. And now whence had he this which he delivered, performing as he did this divine action without any premeditation? He gained it all at the foot of the cross of our adorable Jesus, whose sacred name he pronounced every moment with a sweetness that passed all human utterance."† Certainly, a preacher of this description is a right wondrous thing. In all other arts, as Novalis observes of the poet, one can perceive how the effect is produced; we can trace the operations of the painter and the musician, but this is something hidden and unsearchable. It is an art wholly immaterial and internal, while inspiring the mind with new, admirable,

and transporting thoughts. We hear strange words and yet know what they signify. A magic power is on the tongue of him who addresses us, and even the commonest and most familiar words come forth from his lips with a fascinating and impressive sound, which retains as with a spell the fast-bound hearer. A Christian who had come from the school of Plato, would observe that it is not by any art such men are able to illustrate their subject, but that it is by a divine power which moves them as in the magnet, for that stone not only draws iron rings, but also imparts a power to those rings by which they can produce the same effect as the stone itself to draw other rings, so that sometimes there is a long concatenation of iron and rings all depending upon each other, while the power which connects them all together is derived from that stone; in like manner religion or the muse infuses into them a divine power, by means of which they can impart their enthusiasm to others. St. Gregory even says that there are many things in the sacred page which when alone he cannot understand, but which when placed before his brethren, he has understood;* for it is with these teachers and the souls of men, as with the rings depending upon the loadstone. It is God who draws human souls through all these, whithersoever he wishes, while they hang depending upon each other, and hence men who in every thing else may remain rude and unskilful can perform this; for they excel not by art, but by a divine power, which accounts for their remaining so deficient in other things; for to this end are such men used by God as his ministers, that we hearing them may know that it is not they who utter these things, to whom there is no great power of intelligence, but that it is God who speaks and announces his will through them to the human race. All this is implied in the conclusion of the memorable sermon of St. Ambrose, in which he expresses his joy on the baptism of St. Augustin, whose conversion promised such utility to the Church. After describing his great talents and acquirements, and how he had clothed him in a black cowl, and with his own hands tied round him a leathern girdle, he is so far from imagining that this conversion reflects glory on himself, that he declares publicly that in previous conversations with this great

* Plato Conviv.

† Le Sacré Mont d'Olivet, 682.

* Hom. in Ezek. ii. 7.

philosopher he used to be pressed by him with such vehemence of dispute that he was obliged in his prayers to God to beg that he might be preserved from his seductions. "Quis expugnabit enim?" he exclaims in conclusion, "quis superavit? Non argumenta, non vis aliqua verborum, sed Dei duntaxat virtus et clementia."*

The instructions of the clergy of the middle ages are extremely interesting in an historical point of view, as reflecting light upon the manners and general spirit of society during that interval; for from the kind of imagery used in illustration, and from the particular motives employed to inculcate justice, we may learn many remarkable features which distinguished the generations to which they were addressed. The sacred Scriptures and traditions show that the Creator is pleased to accommodate his voice to the pursuits and circumstances of men, as when to the Chaldeans, who learned wisdom not in books but in observing the sky, he sent a star. Magdalen is drawn by her tenderness and love, David by his just and generous heart, Xavier by his vast and noble sentiments and desires, Ignatius by his passion for chivalrous loyalty to an earthly king. To Hubert, the lover of hunting, who follows the chase through the immensity of the Ardennes, is given the apparition of a miraculous stag, and others are similarly excited by movements congenial to their habits and dispositions. In accordance with this divine economy, which is termed by the school congruity of grace, we find that the commissioned teachers who in different ages announced the will of Almighty God, have always availed themselves of the predominant affections and disposition of the men whom they instructed, in order more effectually to obtain their assent. Moreover, their descriptions of sacred events are often, for the same reason, mere stamps or reflections of contemporary society. For this power of anachronism is of great importance in conducting minds which are submerged in the manners of their time, which are ready to receive with simplicity any great historic traditions, provided they are clothed in the mantle which they wear themselves. It would be a curious exercise to pursue this inquiry in reference to the modern compositions. Even the spiritual writers of the present day are obliged to borrow comparisons from ignoble pursuits, and to employ motives sometimes which require not a little ingenuity in the

orator to be rendered reconcileable with the grandeur and sanctity of the Christian law. Many words of daily use repeated from the pulpit, agree strangely with the evangelic context, and even from the imagery and motives employed in the exhortations which are addressed to our age, posterity will have no difficulty in determining by what name it may be distinguished. Similarly from the orations of Bossuet, and even from the pages of Malebranche, it is easy to discover that the predominant passions and tastes of the men to whom they were addressed, were not of an heroic or natural character. Now on taking up the sermons of the middle age, we feel as if in a different world, and no longer with men callous save to crime and egotism. It is the contrast between guiding a generous steed with a silken thread, and having to lash a wretched hackney, whose only spirit is in vice—a coarse, swollen animal, without mettle and without shame. When the guides of the middle age, as in the work of Christine de Pisan, composed of extracts from the Scripture and the holy fathers, and the ancient philosophers and poets, say that human life may be strictly called chivalry, every man, as man, having to combat vices, and as a Christian to resist the assaults of the enemy from hell,—when St. Francis calls brother Gilles one of his knights of the round table, when St. Bernard, repeating the seven penitential psalms without distraction, is compared by brother Gilles to a castle vigorously attacked, and courageously defended, when St. Theresa entitles one of her sublime books "the Castle of the Soul," we may easily infer what were in these times the circumstances of society, and the particular character of the age. From the sermon of Robert de Sorbonne, on conscience, historians can learn what were the customs and rules of the university of Paris in his time, in regard to scholastic exercises and examinations; for they are in the most minute detail employed as images to illustrate the day of God's eternal judgment. In like manner, one can ascertain the prevailing character of men by observing the peculiar motives urged upon them by the clergy. Remark the mode of persuasion adopted by father John de Avila, "Since you are a gentleman and a valorous knight," he says to one of his correspondents, "combat virtuously, and under no false colours, which of all things a Christian ought most to hate; and since you love simplicity, be in fact what you are in name and appearance. How will you be able to answer in the day of visitation, if you live

* Serm. XCII.

thus now in the world? How can you suppose that your Lord will acknowledge you as his knight and champion, since you have always fought in the camp of his enemies? Do you expect a recompense from Him whom you have never served?"* Again, he says, "It is no small honour to a knight when his king places him in the post of danger. The knights and noblemen hold that for a high grace, as a mark of the king's confidence in them; and so should the Christian regard the perils and sufferings of his course."† The sermons of Thomas à Kempis furnish similar indications of the spirit of his age. "The world," he says, "praises its lovers, brave knights and barons, because they fight for their country, and expose themselves to many dangers, and manfully to death, and prefer the common to all private and selfish good. How much more is Christ to be praised and to be loved who was crucified and slain for us all that we might live for ever and reign with him in heaven."‡ You perceive what were the motives that sunk the scale with men of these times, the wings by which their souls were raised aloft, and made the guests of heaven. The clergy of the middle ages have been condemned for preaching with great vehemence against customs, which were in themselves trivial or indifferent. In the eleventh century, they opposed themselves to the extravagant fashion of men wearing long hair like women, floating down their shoulders. Robert, count of Flanders, who had so distinguished himself at the siege of Jerusalem, having gone to St. Omer, to celebrate the festival of Christmas, a number of prelates and lords repaired there. The holy Godefroi, bishop of Amiens, was of the number, and the count begged him to sing the mass of midnight, which he did. But when the lords came to the offering, a similar scene occurred as that which took place at Cremona, which was observed in the last book; for the bishop would not admit any one who wore this long hair. The courtiers began to murmur, and to ask who was this bishop that assumed such authority in a strange diocese? Learning that it was Godefroi, so renowned for his extraordinary piety, they resolved to sacrifice the vain ornament of their hair rather than deprive themselves of the benediction of such a holy bishop. Immediately they began to cut off their hair, some with their knives, and others even with their swords.§

Men ridicule the preachers and moralists of the middle ages, for laying such stress upon peculiar fashions of dress, and for opposing certain novelties with such vehemence, yet St. Clemens Alexandrinus who saw the old civilization, does not think it unfitting to occupy several pages of his philosophic treatises with similar disquisitions; and against embroidered sandals, Attic and Sicyonian shoes and Persian buskins, he declaims with as much energy as any monk ever evinced in combating the shoes with long points.* The fact is, that even in what relates to the clothing of the body, men can be unjust, and therefore to condemn the zeal of ecclesiastics in combating particular innovations, without knowing on what grounds they oppose them, is both rash and unphilosophical.† Every kind of absurd refinement or barbarism has been from age to age combated by the clergy, who were the guardians of good taste as well as of religion and morals. Was it ridiculous to oppose the introduction of an effeminate costume, which of itself might have softened the character of a whole people? or to abolish indecent ceremonies at weddings, or the fashion of daubing the face with red and white paint?‡ The statutes of the city of Verona record, that at the persuasion of St. Bernardine of Sienna, the games which used to be celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent, were transferred to the Thursday before Quinquagesima; and at Perugia, where many yearly lost their lives at certain tournaments, he prevailed on the magistrates to ordain that in future only blunted and inoffensive weapons should be used in the conflict. So also Bernardine Feltrensis persuaded the magistrates of Verona to put off to a less solemn day, a grand tournament which had been prepared for the festival of St. John the Baptist, and which the people were eagerly expecting. Did not such interference serve the cause of humanity and of religion, by keeping it pure from an association with passions of a doubtful character?

Upon the whole, the preaching of the clergy, during the middle ages, as well as every other mode of extending their influence, was worthy of the ages of faith, in regard to the thirst and fulfilment of justice. Even considered merely as philosophic discussions, their sermons are entitled to all possible attention. They furnish proof that

* Epist. XLIII. † Epist. XXXIV. Pars 2.

‡ Sermon III. Pars I.

§ Recherches Hist. sur le Diocèse de Séz, p. 257.

* Stromat. Lib. II. c. 11.

† Drexelius de Cultu Corporis.

‡ Maillardi Sermones in die Sancti Joannis Baptistæ.

the ecclesiastical superiors of those days, with all their solicitude for the sacred deposit of faith, and all their reverence for antiquity, were not afraid of genius in the pulpit. No doubt to persons who only read them, there appears to be much repetition and unnecessary development; but it should be remembered, that they were addressed to different persons in succession, and that it entered not into the imagination of those who heard them to desire novelty. "Let us not be weary of repeating the same things, since we speak to new hearers," says St. Augustin. Does it not often happen that when we show to persons who have never before seen them, certain spacious and beautiful places, either in cities, or in the country, which from long habit of seeing we ourselves pass by without any pleasure, we find our delight revived in the pleasure which novelty inspires in them? and in proportion as they are more bound to us by the chains of love, these things that had been old and familiar became new to us. How much more then ought we to be delighted when we approach to learn respecting God, on account of whom all things whatever that are to be said are said; so that our preaching, which had become frigid from being often heard, should be renovated by the impression of novelty upon them, and should grow fervent in consequence of their not being accustomed to hear it?"*

In regard not only to the traditions of the early church, but also to all the old and precious virtues of humanity, the desire of the clergy was that of the great Mantuan—

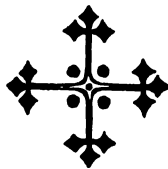
"Ferre per antiquos patrum vestigia gressus,
Et veteres servare vias, revocare vagantes
Per valles et saxa greges, per lustra ferarum
Figere in antiquis iterum magalia campis."

That the people were to be fed with the plain and vivifying food of apostolic doctrine, and not with the empty and unintelligible sounds of a vain philosophy, was proclaimed

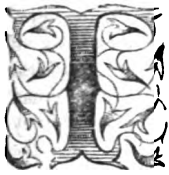
even by the material monuments of the middle age; for on the pulpit supported by eight columns, which bishop Tustin in the year 1180 placed in the cathedral of Mazara, in Sicily, might be read this inscription, "*Prædica evangelium meum universæ creaturæ. Ad cælum via non fuerat Babylonica turris.*"* But what matter could be found more abundant for a grave and copious discourse than the high themes of eternal providence, and the stupendous mysteries of human redemption? The great rhetorical masters of antiquity esteemed that they had chosen the grandest subjects, when they treated on virtue, on providence, on the origin of souls, on friendship. "These are the things" adds Quintilian, "by means of which both the mind and the language are elevated, when we show what things are truly good, what mitigates fear, restrains cupidity. When we learn to despise the opinions of the vulgar, and to believe that the mind is celestial," all which certainly acquire an infinite exaltation, and wholly a divine character, as we find them in the Catholic doctors, whose discourses might dispense men from ever consulting the worthies whom he opposes to the world, the Fabricii, Curii, Reguli, Decii, and Mutii. What other men will be able to speak like the Gregories, the Bernards, the Anselms, the Bedes, the Fenelons, the Challoners, on fortitude, on justice, faith, continence, frugality, contempt of pain and death? And to what class of mankind, or to what regions did not their divine instructions extend? Through their lips did the Creator send his word to the earth, and it ran swiftly; he sent forth his voice and he melted the congealed hearts; at the breathing of his Spirit the waters flowed. No longer exclusively were Jacob and Israel to be satiated, but to every nation did he send the living streams of the true life, and manifest his justice and his judgments.

* S. August. de catechizandis rudibus.

* Sicilia Sacra, tom. II. 845.



CHAPTER VI.



O the morality of the ages of faith, and to that of the middle ages in particular, there belonged many remarkable characteristics which cannot be mistaken or overlooked by any one who studies history with attention and fidelity. In the first place, according to the distinction of Nicholas de Lyra, it was heroic, which was to say much in brief. Principles, thoughts and deeds bore that stamp. Proof of this may be found in every work which transmits to us a knowledge of those times, not excluding even the testimonies of poets and painters, for they did but copy what they beheld around them when they imparted to those whom they represented that external dignity and grandeur which was only produced by the greatness of the heart within. What senatorial majesty in Titian's countenances! What a divine serenity in Godfrey of Bouillon, as described by Tasso—

"His face and forehead full of noblesse were
And on his cheek smiled youth's purple beams;
And in his gait, his grace, his acts, his eyes,
Somewhat far more than mortal lives and lies."*

As Spenser says,

"All good and honour might therein be read,
For there their dwelling was."

This proclaimed the presence of that heroic and divine virtue which Homer, in whose mind its ideal passed, makes Priam ascribe to Hector, saying that he was greatly good—

οὐδὲ ἔφηκε
Ἄνδρὸς γε θνητοῦ πᾶσι ἔμμεναι, ἀλλὰ θεοῖο.

In fact, the beatitudes to which the Catholic manners were wholly directed, involve of necessity actions eminently heroic, as St. Bernardine of Sienna remarks, accepting even the exact Homeric distinction of excellently good.† "The virtue of justice in man," saith he, "is twofold, common or political, by which he renders to others what is reason-

ably due; and excellent, attended with hunger and thirst, when he pays the debt of justice with a fervent desire, and speculates to work it with subtilty."* Instances of this subtle speculation to act justly, producing no doubt extraordinary effects—for spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues—are the occasion of many sublime and wondrous episodes in the history of the middle ages, but such as are completely unintelligible to the moderns, to whom they appear precisely the most striking evidence that the annals of mankind furnish of barbarism and ignorance. Not penetrating to the tender, profound and subtle motive of those they read about, they deride the vest of Dominicus Loricatus, and express pity for Jacoponus, whom they think really and for the first time mad, when he showed himself like the savage from the woods. The pages of Christian history are to them like those fragments of maps and pictures which seem so many separate monsters to children, till one gives them a clue by which they can put them together and form from them an harmonious whole.

Now, reader, mark my words, and judge whether it were not the prevalence of this spirit which rendered history so favourite a pursuit in the Catholic society of the middle ages. We are told that even down to the present day every city of Spain has its particular chronicle; and Muratori says, that "there is scarcely any city of name in Italy, which cannot show at least one or more ancient writers of its history, while at the same time it remembers and deploras having lost others.† It was the same in other countries previous to the dissolution of the ancient social state, by the influence of the new philosophy, which struck at the roots of history, by taking away from the manners of men heroism and admiration, and by reducing every thing to calculation and selfishness. When John of Bruges heard George Cœlius mention his having found in the library of the monastery of Alcoba a manuscript in which were writings

* Tom. III. de Beatit.

† In Script. rer. Ital. Præfat.

• XX. 7.

† Tom. III. s. IV.

of St. Isidore and St. Alfonso, de viris illustribus, he could not rest until he had it in his hands. Having devoured it with eyes and soul, he says, "I found all things greater than I had even expected; so that I was impelled to the resolution of applying seriously to the writing of history."* "Heavens!" he exclaims, "how rich I found Spain in all arts! What an indefatigable fervour for vindicating the Christian religion! What proofs of all virtues! How many examples of all memorable things!"† In like manner of every people during the ages of faith, it was a lively joy to search into annals which recounted the former deeds. "What magnanimous spirits in the barbarism of the middle age!" cries Silvio Pellico. "What martyrs to truth! what benefactors to the afflicted! what fathers of the church, admirable by their colossal philosophy, and by their ardent charity. What valiant heroes, defenders of justice! what communicators of light, wise poets, wise naturalists, wise artists!"‡

Even at the very moment of greatest enthusiasm for classical studies in Italy, there were learned men and philosophers who were too acute to speak except ironically of the barbarism of the middle ages. Benedict Aretino says, that whoever would diligently read the books of Leonardo Aretino on the deeds of the Florentines, in which he relates the whole history of Italy during a long interval, would be convinced that they had nothing to fear from a comparison with antiquity. "What cities of old," he asks, "were ever comparable in true greatness to the republics of Florence and Venice, in which the worship of Almighty God was celebrated with such care and devotion, and magnificence? Doth it not shame you," he adds, "to have affirmed that there were no great citizens in these latter ages, when you are constrained to behold such immortal monuments of men endowed with the highest prudence, charity, subtilty, religion, temperance, and magnanimity? the enumeration of whom, even in our age, must be renounced, their number being almost infinite, yet of whose heroic virtue we can judge from witnessing only a few such as Bartholomeo Valerio, Nicholas Uzano, and Guido Thomasi, men truly wise, religious, and just; who with John of Medicis, Gino of Caponi, Miglore

Gradagno, Dino Ughucci, Petro Baroncelli, Bartholomeo Corbinelli, Francis Federigo, Uguccio Ricci, Lupus Castilione, Philip Corsini, and Charles Strozza, were illustrious citizens worthy of eternal honour, whom we see succeeded by others now living, of similar manners, none of whom I ought to name unless Cosmo of Medicis, son of John, of whom it would be affectation not to speak, who was in youth of such modesty and continence, and who in mature age shows such wisdom and justice; whom the whole population love as the mildest and most humane of the human race.*

From that series of holy and illustrious men whom Padua produced, what sublime episodes might be furnished to the muse! Time would fail me, were I to speak of those great counts Manfred and Raimerio, Schinello and Albert of Baone, or the nobles of the house of Carrara. To ennoble that city, would have sufficed the single family of Campisamperio, which derived its name from the first of its Tiso's of whom it boasts four,—that illustrious general and duke of Padua, who moved at the sermons of blessed Antony, abdicated all the honours of the world, and retired to the town of Campo San Pietro, near which, in the branches of a walnut-tree, he constructed a lodge, and thence, as from a pulpit, preached Jesus Christ to the people; and which subsequently produced that other Tiso, surnamed the Great, who delivered his country from the tyrannous yoke of Ecelino.†

How clearly might men have discerned the admirable influence of Catholic principles on the heroic character, in the conduct of the great counts of St. Boniface at Verona, of that illustrious house, one of the most ancient in Italy, which derived its splendour from the favour of many sovereign pontiffs, just and religious men, who as Guelphs defended the church, as well as the freedom and dearest interests of the people?‡ Above all, witness Venice, and her dukes and senators. How inspiring to see them pass before us as they are cited by Crassus, and to hear of Andrew Dandolo, who in justice, innocence, and learning, was what others wish to seem, of Andrew Contarino, unconquerable in

* Joan. Vassii Brugensis *Rer. Hispanicarum* Chronic. cap. I. † Id.

‡ Dei doveri degli uomini, c. 7.

* De Præstantia Virorum sui ævi *Dialogus*.

† Bernardini Scardeonii *Hist. Patavine*. *Thesaur. Antiq. Ital.* tom. VI. *Chronic. Rolandini*, cap. 7.

‡ Torelli Sarayne *Hist. et Gesta Veronensium*, Lib. I. *Thesaur. Antiq. Italie*, IX.

magnanimity, who evinced through life a sincerity and moderation that were beyond all praise, of Francis Donatus, whose grave and venerable aspect is so well represented by Titian, eminent for civil prudence and justice, of Leonardo Lauretano, that true lover of his country and of virtue incorruptible, of Nicolas Marcellus, a man of innocence and spotless honour, than whom no one was ever chaster as a youth, more just as a man of mature years, or more eloquent or wise in old age, so that the whole state admired and venerated him, learned without ostentation, who knew how to possess the highest grandeur with the deepest humility, of Nicholas Ponte, the true philosopher, not more eminent for learning than for faith and virtue, who at the Council of Trent evinced such knowledge of the Christian mysteries, that he merited praise from the fathers of every nation, of Pascalis Ciconea, uniting the rare qualities of a great prince with innocence and sanctity, and charity, who lived holily and justly, in peace and war, of Peter and John Mocenici, brothers, liberal, just, brave, and pacific, of the invincible Sebastian Venarius, who seemed raised up for the liberty of his country, and the defence of the Christian name, frugal, holy, and just, who presided at the consecration of the votive church of Christ the Redeemer, on the liberation of Venice from the pestilence, of Antonio Quirino, the accomplished senator, of Bernardo Justiniani, so admirable for wisdom and erudition, that in his old age and blindness, the senators would adopt no measure without consulting him, of Frederick Valarezzo, equally eminent in the senate and in the schools, of Francis Barotius, so profound in theology and knowledge of the Christian fathers, of John Basadonna, amongst the just and innocent for ever enrolled, glorious in letters, and renowned as a senator of the republic, of Paul Paruta, who passed with such honour through all high offices, and yet left to posterity so many monuments of his erudition, of those heroic commanders Augustus Barbadoico, Benedict and Jerome Pisauri, men of almost incredible sanctity of life, of Charles Zeno, whom the Venetians compare with the noblest captains of antiquity, of Francis Barbarus, uniting the splendour of all virtues to the senatorial purple, of James Fuscarenno, whose private and public life were equally admirable, of Antonio Bragadeno, whom historians know not whether to rank among

heroes or among saints and martyrs, of Petro Prioli, wise, eloquent, brave, and holy, of Vincent Maurocenus, alike under the robe and under the cuirass, admirable for devotion, justice, and humanity, of Benedict Eritius, who retained such purity of manners from youth to great old age, removed from all contention and vanity, never breaking silence excepting when moved by zeal for justice, of James Æmilianus, whose innocence and probity no orator could worthily celebrate, of Petre Sanutus, who united profound skill and prudence with the simplicity of a youth, and who was never known to utter a word that might not have been addressed to cloistered nuns, of Vincent Gradonicus, who seemed so richly to merit the felicity which followed him through life, of Marinus Georgius, who at his own expense built the church of St. Dominic, and died in odour of sanctity, of John Cornelius, who through love of justice would not spare his own son when obnoxious to the laws, of Marc Antonio Trevisano, who gave all his goods to the poor, and was called to a better life while assisting at mass in the church of St. Francis ad Vineam, of Vitus Caotorta, whose breast was a sanctuary, so that his countenance alone was enough to disarm the most ferocious, and convert cruelty into reverence and peace. Magnificent procession of heroic men, who seem to have reconciled two things of most difficult combination, reaping at the same time human glory and divine beatitude.*

A modern and illustrious historian remarks, "the prodigiously audacious sentiment of the moral power and grandeur of man, which was manifested generally in the twelfth century."[†] He might well be struck, for throughout that whole history he had seen multitudes in every rank and order of life, ready at all times to join their invincible might to do worthy and godlike deeds. Indeed, wherever the heroic spirit existed, it was not one but every kind of virtue which might be expected, for all wickedness is weakness, as Clemens Alexandrinus remarks: "Of the thousand sins which men commit, there are but two causes, the roots of every sin being weakness and folly, neither wishing to command passion nor to learn what is right."[‡] Now this heroism was inseparable from the piety of the middle ages, for religion

* Nic. Crassi Elogia Patriciorum Venet. The-saur. Antiq. Italice, tom. V.

† Michelet, Hist. de France, II. 393.

‡ Stromat. Lib. VII. 16.

is its source, as is remarked by John Picus of Mirandula, in writing to a friend whom he invites to become his companion in studies, to whom he says, "You will see that with me there is nothing of more importance than that I should join piety with wisdom. A multitudinous course of discipline, and whatever letters can promise, may colour the skin, and render the face fairer as if with paint, but we cannot hope for a sound, firm, and robust mind from any other source besides integrity of life and divine religion."* Accordingly, this character in the first place belonged in an eminent degree to the justice of the martyrs, whom, as St. Augustin says, "if the ecclesiastical custom of speech permitted, we should call our heroes."†

In fact, history in the middle ages adopted as such, those whom the Church hath canonized, and rightly, for how can an historian omit mention of those men whom God hath given to the world, by the example of whom so many were delivered from it and saved? Lucius Marineus, the Sicilian, dedicates one part of his chronicle to speak expressly of the saints of Spain: Vincent, Laurence, Illefonso, Leocadia, Eulalia, Florentina, Turibio, Victor, Lauriano, Fulgentio, Ferdinand, Valerian, Emetherius and Cheledonius, Zoylo, John, Faustus, Januarius, Torquatus, Lambert, Æmilian, Juliano, Casilla, Isidore, Antonio, Dominic, and numerous others.‡

The charm which such lives throw upon history in general, is remarked by Chateaubriand, who says, that it is very easy to make from them passages full of simplicity, poesy, and interest. "I am aware that the very multitude of these Christian heroes has been made a ground of objection by the moderns, who seem to think that it is sufficient cause to omit mention of any person as historic, because the Church has enrolled him in the number of the saints. True the multitude of canonized saints was great, but the church had not the policy of the ancient Romans, who, as Cicero remarks, did not give out that Tullius Hostilius, struck by lightning, was received into the number of the gods like Romulus, by that kind of death, lest this honour should become vile and vulgar, by being so soon after attributed to another. What a multitude of saints! True, but judge them with the penetrating eyes of a

St. Augustin, when he reviews the lives of the Gentile heroes, and then say whether history hath not a right to claim them as its brightest ornaments, proving the accuracy of St. Augustin's remark, that true justice is only to be found in that republic of which the founder and ruler is Christ."* Considering them even without the effulgent circlet, say what act of theirs wanted the stamp of incorruptible justice, of heroic virtue? Not confined, however, to the witnesses of truth, heroism belonged to the general morality of the middle ages.

Many characteristics of the ancient Christian society, as of that of Spain before the French philosophy had entered, according to the report of Huber, may be explained in two words, neither of them, as he says, Spanish or German, and certainly neither of them discoverable in the language of any people during times of Catholic civilization. Men were not disenchanted, as the French say, nor sophisticated, according to the expression of Shakespeare, who beheld the gathering mists of the new philosophy. There was a freshness and a vigour diffused throughout the social state, and heroism was evinced in every profession and walk of life.

In our times, we hear of youths being educated for the particular ranks to which they are destined, and carefully prevented from receiving any instruction, or acquiring any disposition or taste that might inspire them with views above the condition in which it is thought most probable that they will amass the greatest wealth. Of this kind of prudence no trace whatever is found in the Catholic society of the middle ages. "Though this book," says Giles of Colonna, "is entitled 'De regimine Principum,' yet the whole people can be instructed by it; for though every one cannot be a king or prince, every one ought to endeavour to become such as to be worthy of being a king or prince."† Examine the models that used to be proposed in the different states and professions. The blessed doctor proposes the manners of youth according to Aristotle, as those which as far as respects liberality, hope, magnanimity, benevolence, mercy, and modesty become kings and all men; Witness the treatise of Charles Paschal, on the duties of an ambassador, and mark how noble fortitude and heroic greatness of mind were then deemed essential in

* Joan. Picus Mirandula, Epist. Lib. I. 33.

† De Civit. Dei, Lib. X. 21.

‡ De rebus Hispaniæ, Lib. V.

* De Civit. Dei, II. 21.

† P. I. Lib. I. c. 1.

‡ Id. IV. I. 1.

the diplomatic life. Witness the anatomy of a juris-consult by Marsilius Ficinus, who represents the worship of God and the love of his country as the chief organs in that composition; and observe his words to Peter Philippo, "I need not paint the ideal, for you have the reality in Francis Soderino your disciple, in whose manners, as in a mirror, you can behold yourself."* The commerce, too, of those times was that great profession which Cicero declares is not to be despised,† and which Plutarch says was formerly glorious, when merchants were the friends of kings, and the founders of great states.‡ John Bonvisia, of Lucca, in the fifteenth century, when a young merchant, pursuing his affairs in Spain, though crowned with such success that the fortunes of his family became greatly augmented, yet obtained from the generosity of his character, the friendship of princes, and became the familiar companion of courtly nobles, till the intense thirst of the heavenly life, which had actuated him from a boy, induced him to renounce the world and assume the habit of a Minor, clad in which, after three years, he returned to his country.§

Open the annals of Genoa, and mark the character of her merchants. See those brothers, Jerome and Sinibald Flisca, of immense wealth, yet than whom are no men more humble or courteous, of sweeter manners, or more remote from all ambition, studious of every beautiful art, delighting in the company of learned men, and rewarding them with liberality. Behold that Adam Centurio, in whose prudence and genius Andrew Doria so much confided, a man of the utmost gravity, abhorring all titles of honour; and that Nicholas Grimaldi, not more conspicuous for his riches, which were immense, than for his munificence and charity, assisting and supporting so many unfortunate citizens, secretly raising up so many that were fallen and adorning the city with edifices of royal munificence.|| We cannot wait to see all pass. Let us only look once more, and behold Francis Vinaldus, who surpassed all the Genoese that ever were in wealth, yet whose moderation in all things was such, that his immense riches never caused the least injury to any one, or proved offensive to any mortal eyes. His houses were neither

sordid, nor such as could attract envy; his tables were always frugal, his manners abstemious, his servants few in number; and with such innocence did he persevere in this simple tenor of life, that he arrived at extreme old age without ever having had an enemy. But lest this moderation should be ascribed to avarice, let it be remembered that this was the Francis who gave that enormous sum to his country, by means of which the public debt was yearly diminished.* "The noble mercantile spirit," as Novalis observes, "the genuine merchant character never flourished excepting in the middle ages. The Medicis, the Fuggers, were merchants in the true sense of the term. Our merchants in general," he adds, "the greatest not excepted, are nothing but shop-keepers."†

In the ages of faith we can trace the same noble spirit descending into the last mechanic's veins. Witness what is related by Sophronius of the young apprentice to a silversmith, who being employed by a nobleman to make a golden cross with precious stones, which he intended to offer to the church, resolved secretly to add to it his wages, that it might be from him like the widow's groat. The nobleman discovered what he had done by investigating the weight, when he obliged the lad to confess the truth; and he judged it such a proof of an heroic spirit, that he made him his heir.‡ This is, indeed, a tale of ancient date, yet a few men of the old mark in walks of trade, have been found remaining even to our times, perpetuated not by means of hereditary profession as at Nuremburgh, but through the influence of the old Catholic morality, as in even the worst cities of France, of whom that just and benign Merlin, that father of learned booksellers on the Augustin's quay at Paris, was one, till lately, known to many scholars of different nations, and dear and venerable to all who had ever heard his sweet, wise words, issuing from a heart which seemed the very sanctuary of peace and honour. He hath lately been cut down, and sorrowful was the crowd that filled the nave and choir of St. Severin, while his body rested there, and mass of Requiem was sung. Men of various ranks stood around, but from the looks of all in common, both young and old, both of high and low degree, one might collect the general impression that

* Epist. Lib. I.

† Lib. I. de Off.

‡ In Solon.

§ Annal. Minorum, tom. XIV.

|| Jacob. Bracellius de claris Genuensibus.

* Uberti Folietæ clarorum Ligorum elogia.

† Schriften, II. 278.

‡ Pratum Spirit. cap. CC.

the mould itself was broken, and that the loss is irreparable when such men die.

Magnanimity was a virtue proposed to novices in religious orders, and enforced by holy masters. "It has its matter," we are told, "in the irascible quality of the soul, and its end is mighty honour and glory, not because it seeks glory as its end; for this it esteems but little, but it desires a great work, which is worthy of honour, and therefore it adds the most noble ornament to all virtue. It visits all fields and the camp of the living God, and animates heroic Christians, raising them above the level of the slothful and indifferent race. "Certe magnanimorum sunt illustria exempla Sanctorum."* Thus even the virtue of the meek inhabitants of cloisters was heroic. "I was ever so affected to maintain the point of honour," says St. Theresa, "that methinks I could never have turned back again upon any terms, when I had once said it."† Pelisson, that child of grace, was on the point of publicly embracing the Catholic faith, when De Montausier was reported to have said to a certain lady of the court, that if that happened, he would be made preceptor to the dauphin and president at Mortier, upon which he instantly resolved to defer his act of publicly embracing the Catholic faith, which he did not execute until there was no longer a pretence to any one for attributing his conversion to human motives. Every year he celebrated the festival of his reception into the Church, and his deliverance from the Bastille by delivering some prisoners, which conduct evinced the same continued heroic courage.

If the virtue of political men and of merchants, whom prudence and interest must generally sway, of cloistered nuns, and convertiles, dead to all ambition of human praise, may be justly said to have been thus heroic, what may not be believed of the morality of those who followed the more eminent and exciting paths of life in those days of chivalry in which honour and religion went hand in hand? Pedantic learning hath concealed Christian titles. Heinsius talks of the ineffable and almost miraculous virtue of the Romans after the expulsion of the kings.‡ Yet, compared to the justice of any humble son of the Church with plain heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigour armed, as he is presented in history during the ages of faith,

* *Instructio Novitiorum* cap. XVIII. auct. P. Joan. à Jesu Maria. † *Life*, I. chap. 3.

‡ *Heinsii Orat.* XIV.

how easy would it be to find words to express it, how very human, not to say how ambiguous doth that pompous virtue appear? But how could one describe the just and lofty mind of Catholics true to their profession, unless by borrowing some gracious verse from poets, as that in which they speak of coming thought on thought, and not a thought but thinks on dignity. The spirit of self-sacrifice so deeply and widely diffused through society often broke forth in sublime instances to be the praise of all future generations, as in the act of Eustache de Saint Pierre and the other five citizens of Calais. Let it be remarked in this instance that it was not patriotism or fraternity, but religion which made them heroic. "It would be a great pity," said Eustache, "to suffer so many people here to die when there may be a remedy to deliver them. It would be great alms and grace towards our Lord. I have such great hope of having pardon from our Lord if I should die to save this people, that I wish to be the first."

What heroism in the morality of that ancient chivalry which was considered to be equally with the clergy the support of justice? "Often have I taken delight," says the old historian of Du Guesclin, "in hearing read the deeds of our fathers under the grace of our Lord, from whom all grace comes. Above all, there was nothing that had relation to chivalry or to clergy which are the way and protection of justice, that was not dear to me. I always haunted in my youth with clerks and knights.* Christine de Pisan after showing that the original object of chivalry was to defend the good against injustice, concludes that it was "very nobly and with just cause instituted, and that it is worthy of the highest renown."

I said, on first announcing the object of this investigation, that although we had withdrawn ourselves from scenes of human glory, we might oft again meet with knights, and how, in fact, without ingratitude, could we refuse to receive them as they pass now before us? Let us only consider the worthies of that one family who were represented on Rinaldo's shield, and not as yet from a poetic picture but from real history, and it will be seen how chivalry and clergy were allied in the cause of justice. There we shall find that as often as the emperors by evil counsel invaded Italy with impious arms in order to subdue the sovereign

* *Chronique de du Guesclin*, III.

pontiffs, the Atestine nobles, with the heroism of a pious and generous mind, undaunted by their threats, never hesitated to resist them, for the liberty of their country and of the church, and for the honour and worship of the true faith. Witness the first Azzo, in the year 949, who resisted Berenger the Third, from whose vengeance he had to fly with his wife into Germany, to Otho the Saxon, where he founded an illustrious line. Then followed his heroic son, Albert Azzo, the first Marquis of Est, by whose assistance Otho defeated the same Berenger when he again troubled Italy. Ugo no less piously contended for the true pontiff, restoring to his seat the fifth Gregory, after which renouncing war, he turned his whole mind to contemplation, and built the monastery of Vagado. Berthold, son of the second Azzo, like his ancestors, contended for the authority of the Roman pontiffs, when Paschal the Second was persecuted, whom he delivered by defeating the emperor Henry, who, though his enemy, was awed into reverence on beholding the divine virtue of a hero who had so faithfully defended against his own impiety the thrice holy priest of God. Albertacius, the fifth marquis, for his noble qualities, as Ariosto testified, deserved to be the husband of Matilda. Rhainald, in defence of the Pope, Alexander the First, pushed forth his white eagle, which thenceforth became the ensignia of his race against the black eagles of Frederick Barbarossa, and in shock of battle with his own hand hurled from his horse that despiser of religion, who could scarcely escape with the aid of his knight, and who afterwards at Venice concluded that treaty with the pontiff, which secured the liberty of the holy Church. Azzo the Fourth delivered Verona from the infamous Salinguerra, and defeated Eccelino at Lubrara : his son Aldrobandino the second Prince of Ferrara, when but a youth, restored by arms to Innocent the Third, the towns which had been wrested from the church by the counts of Celani, who in revenge basely procured his death by poison. His brother, Azzo the Fifth, honoured by Pope Honorius the Third, who made him Prince of Ancona and Senegallia, had been most dear to Frederick the Second ; but no sooner did that emperor attack the church, than he forsook and resisted him, choosing rather to please God than kings ; and when he defeated the imperial forces under the walls of Parma, and delivered that city, he chose for his share of the spoil nothing but the lions which were in the imperial camp,

which he sent as trophies of his victory to Ferrara, where they were kept in that spot which has ever since retained their name. This was the hero who delivered Italy from the monster Eccelino, who had devoured thirty-three thousand men. Borsio, created Duke of Ferrara by Paul the Second, devoted all his efforts to give his people peace. The noble Gyraldus saith that we can judge of the tranquillity of his mind from merely beholding that bronze image which represents him seated in the Forum, wearing that mild and truly regal aspect, to show that all within was composed of peace and justice. He it was who constructed at great expense the illustrious Carthusian monastery, where, after twenty-two years of glorious reign, he left his bones. Hercules the second Duke, spent his whole life in labours and the exercise of justice, as if his name had been a presage of his fortune. Alfonso the First was such a lover of tranquillity, that unless it had been otherwise ordained, he would have secured to the people perpetual peace, for under that warlike front represented by the ancient painter, all composed to Catonian gravity, lay hid as under clouds, a meek, gentle, and benign spirit. Yet a brave man was he who in the battle of Aquadusa, delivered Fabricius Colonna from the jaws of death, when wounded and lying amidst hostile swords. Hercules the Second, had not like the preceding, to lament a reckless youth, for while but a stripling, his heart was given all to God, and at that age when nature is intemperate, he who was held by no law made a law unto himself, and having appeased the perturbations of his own mind, all his care was to leave an example of just life and a solid peace to his people ; and knowing that no prince ever gained glory by warlike actions, without inflicting misery on men, he sought another way to glory by toiling for the public good, and for this end when he knew that there were persons who endeavoured to alienate from him the mind of Paul, the sovereign pontiff, that he might secure peace he went to Rome, and when in presence of the pope, showed with eloquence that all the heroes of his family, from the first Azzo in 949, to his father Alfonso, during a space of five hundred and eighty-seven years, had given proof of their faithful attachment to the Roman Church, the safety and honour, and freedom of whose sovereign pontiffs they had always preferred before their own.* This was the true

* Gyraldi Ferrarriensis de Ferrar. et Atestineis Principibus Comment.

chivalrous spirit of the middle ages, so that these heroes who contended for the freedom of the Church might be said, like the Herculean of old, to have laboured not only in the cause of justice, but for the salvation of the human race. The spirit of chivalry, however, then pervaded all orders in the state, and men of every degree.

Virgil's maxim, which Ives de Chartres styles the ancient praise of the powerful,

"Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,"

is quoted by that holy bishop in his collection, with as much emphasis as if it had been a decree of the canons, teaching the duty of all men invested with power.* How noble is that detestation of baseness which was such a characteristic of Catholic manners, that as the wood of Vezelai could testify one act of treason was sufficient to impart to the scene in which it occurred, a name of infamy which, stamped by the ancient tongue, no length of years could ever obliterate.† The sandy plain, too, in the valley of Thurr in Alsace, still preserving in its name of the field of lies the memory of the treason there consummated against the unhappy emperor Louis-le-debonnaire by his rebellious sons, is another of those spots "where a word, ghost-like, survives to show what crimes from hate have sprung."‡ That profound sense of personal dishonour on beholding injustice triumphant, is assuredly also calculated to excite the highest admiration even when presented in the page of old romance, amidst wild and extravagant incidents. When Danayn-le-Roux in the history of Gyron-le-Courtois, finds in a forest, a strange knight about to kill another knight and a lady who are bound to a tree, whom he accuses of treason, he throws himself between them, and exclaims, "Noble sir, do me not such an outrage and dishonour as to kill before my face this knight and this lady. The shame would be mine if they should die in my presence before the reason was made perfectly clear." Upon which the other replies in a transport of rage, "God's mercy, Sir, certainly one may now say truly, that knights errant are the most foolish men in the world, for they will often interpose in matters that concern them not. But tell me, fair Sir,

I pray, how doth this affair concern you, that you suppose you ought to contend with me?"* We may observe here, that the fabulist hath not roved to falsehood in his dreams, for this hearty zeal to serve justice, was once diffused and eminent, where now such selfishness reigns in recreant hearts, that men are slow or neglectful to absolve their part of good and virtuous, if it be not evident that their own persons or purses are at stake. Old affection for these tales of chivalry may excuse my remarking that the maintenance of justice by individual force was not always represented in them, in exclusion of legal retribution, for even knight errants are shown respecting law. When Danayn-le-Roux hears the charge brought against Gyron and the lady by Hellyn-le-Roux, who was about to kill them in the forest, Danayn replies to him, "Sire, I am of opinion, according to the judgment of knight errants, that you cannot cause him to be put to death until you have proved your accusations against him in some court."† The abuse of the chivalrous spirit, or the extravagant language of its admirers, ought not to render us insensible to the real merit which was indicated under that title. It should be remembered that for its greatest defects there was always a remedy at hand in the religious sentiment which had overthrown the whole Gentile theory of glory, and displayed a new banner. Aristotle styles honour "the greatest of external goods." Clearly, therefore, his idea of honour was wholly different from that of the just men of Catholic times, with whom it signified an internal consciousness of fidelity, and of whom we might say, in the words of St. Jerome, "that by flying from glory they deserved it."‡ "We ought to have regard to honour," says Giles of Colonna, "not as ambitious or as placing our end in honour, but as doing works worthy of honour."§

The Pythagoreans had a saying, 'Ἀνελύθερος νᾶς ὅστις εἰς δόξαν θάπει, which might have been a motto in the middle ages, for such glory entered not into the motives of heroic men, when, as St. Jerome says, the desire of glory had been cured by the contention of humility. Catholicism, indeed, had its glory, but not such as "rears its heaven-offending trophies where praise can waste her voice on works of tears, anguish,

* Ivonis Carnot. Epist. LXI. CCX.

† Duchesne, Antiquit. des Villes de France, I. 217.

‡ Wordsworth.

* f. CCCXIII.

+ f. CCCXIII.

† Epist. 27.

§ De Regim. Princip. II. l. 24.

and death."* It was the glory of obedience, of sacrifice, of charity, humility, chastity, poverty. "The prince," says Giles of Colonna, "must not esteem himself happy when he is in glory with men, but only when he is in glory with God."† Literally the mind of the middle ages might have been expressed in the words of the poet,

"This is true glory and renown : when God
Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all his angels."

"The desire of human glory," say the angel of the school, "takes away magnanimity : for of necessity, he who seeks human favour must be subservient to the will of others in every thing that he says or does : and thus, while he studies to please men, he becomes the servant of each."‡ With knightly Catholics, honour was nothing but the fulfilment of justice. The Count de Montfort had been employed by St. Louis to pay his ransom to the sultan : the king and host were already embarked, and even far from shore, when the count said, laughing, that the Sarrassins had been tricked out of more than 2000 besans, and that it was easy for any one to be more cunning than the traitors who had neither faith nor law. "But the king," says Joinville, "became very angry, and sent him back, at the great risk of his life, to restore that sum to the Sarrassins." An old French poet, after combating the chimerical ideas which some entertained respecting honour, examines expressly in what consists true honour in every condition of life, and decides that it is in the fulfilment of the particular duty attached to each, and in the exercise of all virtues.§

"*Is est honos homini pudico, meminisse officium suum.*"

Moreover the honour of the middle ages was generally a religious principle, as the Milanese had reason to remember, when their deputies discovered what were the designs of their own captain-general, and said in bitter self reproach, "We ought not to have placed our hopes in a man who had outraged God and the Church."|| The frank and noble confidence of the

chivalrous spirit was nothing but a reliance on justice: Don Alonzo VI., after being deprived of his kingdom of Leon, lived retired at the court of the Moorish king of Toledo, whence on the death of Don Sancho, the states called him to the crown, but as secretly as possible, fearing lest the Moors, hearing of their intention, might retain him by force. Alonzo immediately disclosed it all. This confidence appeared so admirable to the Moorish king, that though he had become acquainted with it, and taken measures to prevent his escape, he not only suffered him to depart free, but even supplied him with money necessary for the journey.* Stephen Pasquier shows that kingdoms in the middle ages have been sometimes preserved in consequence of having their young princes confided to the guardianship of their enemies, and cites as an instance John V. duke of Brittany, who in dying left his children under the protection of Oliver de Clisson, who had been his personal foe, and a claimant of the ducal throne. As soon as Clisson, received the news of his appointment, he was visited by the countess of Penthièvre, his daughter, who remarked to him that the opportunity, by means of this appointment, was now come to take possession of the duchy. On hearing her speak thus, this just prince was roused to indignation ; "Ah, wicked, miserable creature," said he, "you will ruin at once both the honour and wealth of our house." He unsheathed his sword, as if the sense of injustice and dishonour had overcome every other sentiment ; but she fled precipitately, and with such haste that she fell and broke a limb, of which she remained lame ever afterwards.† Again, in what an heroic light does the justice of the middle ages, in relation to loyalty and personal gratitude, appear in the pages of history ! When the prince of Wales offered to deliver Du Guesclin, on condition of his swearing that he would not bear arms against the king of England, nor assist count Henry in obedience to the will of the French king, the knight replied, "Alas, my Lord, how would it be possible for me not to serve before all others, and in every place, the king of France, and his blood, who has nourished me ? Truly, I would rather die in your prisons where I am than take the oath."‡

* Wordsworth.

† Ugidius Romanus de Regimine Principum, P. I. Lib. I. cap. 8.

‡ S. Thom. de Regimine Principum, cap. 7.

§ Gouget, Lib. Française, tom. XII. 213.

|| Machiavel's Hist. of Florence, Lib. VI.

* Savedra, Christian Prince, II. 14.

† Recherches de la France, Liv. VI. 31.

‡ Chronique de Du Guesclin, 275.

The Catholic hero of the middle ages was no time-server, no slave to human respect, when justice was at stake—

"Nor number nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant
mind,
Though single."

How noble and heroic does the justice arising from the principles of religion appear when contrasted with the civil prudence of a Cardan, where he says, writing as a philosopher,* "Always keep three things before your mind in every affair; *quam recte? cui bono? quid dicent homines?*" The just man, in Catholic ages, limited his inquiry to the first of these questions, and when once that was determined, took no thought for the consequences. That Heaven's will must be done, as is said in the oldest tragedy of the Greeks, was his conclusion.

πίπτει δ' ἀσφαλὲς οὐδ' ἐπὶ νότῳ,
κορυφῇ διὸς εἰ κρανθῇ πρῶγμα τέλειον.†

Therefore the Catholic discipline was not designed for such carpet champions as old fable represents spending their luxurious days in the palace of Armida. *Cur timido animo Christianus es?* is the sudden and sublime interrogation of St. Jerome.‡ Let us hear the voice of the middle ages in the reproof which the holy hermit addresses to Rinaldo, in the Italian poet—

"Not underneath sweet shades, and fountains
shrill,

Among the nymphs, the fairies, leaves, and
flowers,

But on the steep, the rough and craggy hill

Of virtue, stand this bliss, this good of ours;
By toil and travel, not by sitting still

In pleasure's lap, we come to honour's bowers:

Why will you thus in sloth's deep valley lie?

The royal eagles on high mountains fly.'

Thus parleyed he—Rinaldo, hushed and still,
Great wisdom heard in those few words com-
piled:

He marked his speech—a purple blush did fill
His guilty cheeks, down went his eye-sight
mild.

The hermit, by his bashful looks, his will
Well understood, and said—'Look up, my
child!

And painted in this precious shield, behold
The glorious deeds of thy forefathers old;

Thine elders' glory herein see, and know
In virtue's path how they trod all their days

* Prudens Civilis, cap. 29. 24.

† Æschylus, Supplices, 85.

‡ S. Hieronym. Epist. V.

Whom thou art far behind—a runner slow

In this true course of honour, fame, and praise.
Up! up! thyself incite by the fair show
Of knightly worth which this bright shield be-
wrays."

The shield represented the heroes of the house of Este. There was seen Caius, chosen prince by the people, Aurelius, who, to his everlasting fame, preserved his subjects from the cruel Huns, Forrest, who fortified Aquilia's town, and for it died, Altine, who built the great city in the vale of Po, where they of Este should by succession long command, and rule in bliss and high renown, who fought against Odoacre, and died for his sweet country's sake, Alphorizio and Azzo, Boniface and Valerian, the last of whom dared to sustain the proud Goths, though scarce in years a man, then Henry, and Berengare the Bold, that served great Charles in his conquests high, Otho, and Almerike, the devout founder of so many churches, who seemed in contemplation wrapt, then Albert, who defeated the Danes, and Hugo, who possessed all Tuscany, Tedaldo, the puissant Boniface, the princess Maude, who conquered the fourth Henry, and from him took

"His standard, and in church it offered;
Which done, the pope back to the Vatican
She brought, and placed in Peter's chair again."

Azzo the fifth, and Guelpho, the Bold,
Bertold,

"With the sixth Azzo, whom all virtues love."

Such was the pedigree of worthies who seemed in that bright shield to live and move, so that Rinaldo waked up, and caught new fire on beholding these nobles of his house. With such thoughts was the heroic spirit of the Catholic morality fed and nourished. Men did not, as at present, permit their memories to dwell upon whatever subject involved any profit, any licence, any doubt, any blame, any scandal; but conformably to the apostle's precept, if any things were true, if any holy, any just, any pure, if there was any love, or anything of good report, if there were any virtue, and any praise, they thought of those things.* Hence, in ages of faith, not only, as the poet says, a proper, but also a most glorious and inspiring study was that of human nature. Shakspeare had only known in reality, and in imagination could have only contemplated a society wholly and

* Philip. IV. 8.

exclusively Catholic, when he broke forth in that exclamation, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!"

"The Spaniards," says Don Savedra, "love religion and justice; they are constant in labours, and profound in council, neither elated by prosperity, nor depressed by misfortune."* You have in these words accurately and beautifully portrayed, the character of the Catholic morality in general during the middle ages. Men now are incessantly taunting generous and heroic youths, by reminding them of what they call the inexorable necessities of life, of which they are for imposing a fresh load at every stage. Aristotle says, that "all necessity is a sad thing;"† elsewhere he remarks, that "youth knows of no necessity." So it was with men, not in theory alone, but practically, during the middle ages. Necessity was not the word to use in attempting to persuade spirits of the old mark. Catholicism knew of no necessity but that of obeying God. Riches had not weakened in men all sentiment, by that atmosphere of little jealousies, little vanities, and fictitious wants, in which they cause so many at present to live without interruption.

The Stagyrite had condemned the pompous trifler, who did all things not for the sake of honour and justice, but in order to show his wealth, thinking that by means of it men would gaze upon him with admiring eyes.‡ "Who would not desire to hold this citadel of virtue," asks St. Ambrose, "unless avarice had first weakened and bent the vigour of his mind? For while we desire to increase riches, to heap up money, to possess lands, to be the first in wealth and possessions, we lay aside the form of justice, and forfeit the common benefit."§ The phrase "a good man," to signify a rich man, is put by Shakspeare in the mouth of a Jew. Had he lived in later times, he need not have sought so far for one to use it. "Avarice," says St. Bernard, "rolls on four wheels of vices, pusillanimity, inhumanity, contempt of God, and forgetfulness of death," precisely the vices most contrary to the spirit and manners of the middle ages. They were not familiar with such men as Argyrippus in the old comedy,

who is represented crouching to his slave when he can gain twenty minæ from him, and addressing him with the epithets, "Salus interioris hominis, amorisque imperator."* "So detestable is avarice," says Giles of Colonna, "that it is better to be prodigal than avaricious, inasmuch as it is better to have a curable than an incurable disease." "Parsimony also is detestable," says that blessed doctor, "which renders men sad at parting with their money, as if it were incorporated with themselves." The proverb says, "vile men spoil a marriage and a feast for a penny-worth of pepper, rendering a whole banquet indecent from wishing to save a moderate expense."†

Persons exposed to any strong temptations, were restrained from performing the action legally denounced by pledging their word of honour, not their money. Charity and blessed mercy dictated, indeed, as we shall see hereafter, innumerable acts of heroic forgiveness; but even in the lowest ranks of the people it would have been deemed infamous to seek a pecuniary reparation from the tribunals for any injury sustained by the intimate sense of that highest injustice which was synonymous with dishonour. In short, the history of the middle ages shows that it was then universally, as at present in Catholic states, where in times of trial every event and circumstance of the world gives occasion to scenes of the noblest heroism, and the highest honour. Enter the sanctuary, visit the court, the tribunals, penetrate into private houses, from the palace to the cottage, and you find that it is so. It is a Pius VI., a good shepherd, ready to lay down his life for his flock; it is a Don Carlos, a just and religious king, refusing all proposals of private compensation, offering himself for his people, serving them with his person, having for his cry of arms, some high sentence like that of the tragic Sophocles, "Whether successful or unfortunate, we shall be found on the side of God."

— ἡ γὰρ εὐτυχίς
οὐκ ἐν τῷ θεῷ φανούμεθ', ἡ πεντανόστις.‡

It is a judge who waters his couch with tears before he awards just judgment; it is a tender mother who thanks God that her son has fallen in the service of his king, and in defence of Christendom; it is a wife solitary

* Savedra, Christian Prince, 380.

† Metaphys. Lib. I. cap. 4.

‡ Libi. IV.

§ S. Ambrosii Lib. Offic. I. c. 28.

* Plautus Asinaria, III. 3.

† De Regim. Princip. II. 1. 17. 24.

‡ Œdip. Tyr. 145.

and helpless in a land of exile, who sends forth her royal consort to win the palm of true honour, as a Christian king, and who dies after his departure through anxiety for his safety. You perceive, reader, how the events which are passing before our eyes can throw light upon the history of past ages, how easy it would be to multiply instances, and how interminable might be the development of this truth, so rich are the varied scenes of human life where Catholicism reigns in all that can exalt the imagination, ennoble the character, and strengthen the heart. The German poets of the twelfth century, in their magnificent opening of the Nibelungen lays, announcing their intention of singing the deeds of heroes, the joys and woes of just and glorious men, promise in fact nothing but what the historians of their age could furnish from living manners and the fluctuating phenomena of real life. Without doubt, the heroic character of this ancient morality involved difficulties and dangers. No one need be told that more than ordinary care was needful in the guidance of such a spirit as that ascribed to king Don Sebastian in the old chronicles, who would have condemned Hercules himself for having had recourse to the prudent policy remarked by Dionysius, in that act when he drove the herd before the cave of Cacus, in order to discover whether they really had within it the stolen oxen.* Of this young king Jerome Conestagius says, in his history of Portugal and Castile, that he used to rejoice when he fought alone with some ferocious beast. If he were about to navigate on the Tagus, or to go by sea from one place to another, he thought it disgraceful to embark on a calm sea. Therefore he studiously waited for tempests: so that by a certain cruel fate, he seemed to hasten to his death.† Under the influence of an heroic spirit, he that should have been, as the abbot of St. Maurice says of Manfred, "a noble creature, he that had all the energy which would have made a goodly frame of glorious elements, might, from their not being wisely mingled or properly directed, become an awful chaos—light and darkness—and mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts mixed, and contending without end or order, all dormant or destructive." Then might come the fluent novelist, de-

monstrating how much better morality was understood by those around him, though he might address himself to a generation the image of whose best-loved men would be but fit to be an ale-house sign, resembling Spenser's portrait of loathsome gluttony:

"Still as he rode, he somewhat still did eat;"

men whose memories as well as hopes are in their stomach, so that they would feel no shame in strengthening their evidence, like the lying slave in Plautus, who after pretending that he had fought from morning till night in some great engagement, adds, "*Hoc adeo hoc commemini magis quia illo die impransus fui.*"* But the blemishes of the heroic character were so unlike the grossness of these spirits vile, that they constituted rather what St. Francis de Sales terms, "the dear imperfections which are means of attaining to perfection." A modern poet seems of this opinion when he says,

"The attributes of those high days
Now only live in minstrel-lays;
For nature, now exhausted, still
Was then profuse of good and ill:
Strength was gigantic, valour high,
And wisdom soared beyond the sky,
And beauty had such matchless beam
As lights not now a lover's dream."

Whatever be the dangers and obstacles attached to the character of heroic virtue, it was clearly shown by the most precise and guarded moralists of the middle age, to be the highest prerogative to crown man's nature. "They who are peculiarly inclined to vice," says Louis of Blois, "and who combat against it with all their strength, arrive at a higher perfection than others who have less difficulties. The image of a prince, which is carved upon stone with infinite labour, is a far more precious work than if it had been imprinted on a soft and plastic earth. Nay more, if those who courageously combat should depart from life with some imperfections, and remain for some time in purgatory, when purified, they will enjoy in heaven greater glory than others who have not shown equal courage and devotion, though they may have attained to the enjoyment of God without passing through the purifying flames."†

The moderns, whose views of morality

* Antiquit. Rom. Lib. I. 39.

† Hieronymi Correstagii de Portug. et Castil. Conjunct. Lib. 1.

* Amphit. I. 1.

† Instit. Spirit. cap. VIII. § 3.

are said to be so superior to those of the middle ages, are impressed with a profound conviction of the truth of what Plautus says, whose words at least prove that they have made no progress in one direction :

"Nec quisquam est tam ingenio duro
Nec tam firmo pectore, quin ubi quicquam
Occasionis sit, sibi faciat bene."

Nay, there are many of them who seem to believe with Protagoras, that the justice and virtue of other men being thought useful to ourselves, therefore the state praises and inculcates them in every man.* In general, all the writers and legislators appear profoundly impressed with the maxim of Galen, who used to say, that "utility alone amongst mortal things is divine." What nature herself rejects, and a certain generous sentiment of virtue proclaiming that self-interest ought not to be the ruling motive of human actions recoils from, the most popular moral writers of our age either directly teach, or clearly enough indicate: nor is it their schools alone which are infested with this persuasion, but much more the common scenes of life. "Sentit domus uniuscujusque, sentit forum, sentit curia, campus, socii, provincie." Give them heedful note, and you will see that they are accustomed to estimate all things in part and in relation to themselves; you will find them indeed full of noble expressions for a general woe, but evincing real sorrow only when under a private calamity. The ancient philosophers, however, on this ground, at least, would hardly subscribe to the opinion of the great modern author, whose affirmation that morality is at present better understood than in Catholic ages, has been allowed to pass current. The Pythagoreans certainly would have refused, who taught what would be flat treason against the modern civilization, that "men should have regard, in the first place, to what is good and honest; but that utility and convenience should be ranked in a secondary place."† It must be admitted that the reverse of this maxim is no where found in the moral features of men during the ages of faith; though what their views of morality in this respect lost in perspicuity they assuredly gained in heroism. In the estimation of our ancestors, virtue was nothing else but the preference given to what was just to what was unjust, what-

ever that preference might have cost. It is true we find them following in Plato's steps, to show that the unjust must be of necessity not only more laborious, but also more unpleasant than the just and holy life.* "Remember," says John Picus of Mirandola, "that it is far sweeter to conquer a temptation, than to consent to the sin to which you are inclined; and in this many are deceived, because they do not compare the sweetness of victory to the sweetness of sin, but they compare the battle to the pleasure: and yet the man who has a thousand times tried what it is to yield to temptation, ought at least for once to try what it is to conquer the temptation."† Still, while the spiritual and heroic authors of the middle ages at times speak thus, they never let pass an occasion without endeavouring to instil the spirit of sacrifice and disinterestedness into the minds of men. "Remark," says Lewis of Grenada, "that the holy Simeon sought not his own but others' good, for he was solicitous rather for the salvation of others than of himself. 'Expectabat enim consolationem Israël,' for which, too, St. Ambrose commends him, saying, "Well did the just man, because he sought, not his own safety, but that of the people; whereas men in this world live only for themselves, and while their own affairs prosper, they think it no concern of theirs though the sky should fall, or the earth be consumed with fire."‡

"As charity is the life of all virtue, so," continues St. Catherine of Sienna, "self-love, which destroys charity, is the execrable source of all evils. All scandals, cruelties, hatreds, and miseries, proceed from that venomous root. This detestable love mortally wounds the universal world, and infects with disease the mystical body of the holy Church, all whose virtues spring from charity."§

St. Peter being in glory upon the top of Mount Thabor, wished for three tabernacles there, one for Christ, one for Moses, another for Elias; "and," observes Father Diego de Stella, "never remembered himself."||

"It seems conformable to nature," says Giles of Colonna, "that a part should expose itself for the whole; for we see that when the head is in danger and the whole

* De Legibus, Lib. II. + Regulæ dirigentes.

† Ludovic. Grenad. In Festo Purificat. Concio IV.

§ S. Cath. Senensis Dialog. Tractat. I. c. 7.

|| On the Contempt of the World, I.

* Plato Protag.

† Jamblich. de Pythagorie. Vit. cap. 31.

body, immediately the arm, which is a part, exposes itself wholly for the head, lest the whole body should perish. So in like manner should kings be ready to devote themselves for the people.* This blessed doctor, even in the comparative intensity of pleasures, shows that the selfish are by nature base, and therefore places gluttony in the lowest hell. The absence of selfishness was deemed the grand remedy for all sin. "In this all doctors agree," says St. Bonaventura, "that the cause of all malice is fear or love, and the cause of fear is self-love. How can you then sin from fear, who desire to be afflicted, and despised, and trampled upon by others? and how can you sin from love, who desire that all love should be transferred to God? Thus you will pass to perfect innocence, and the consummation of sanctity."† All members of the ecclesiastical state were to imbibe the spirit of the example of Jesus Christ, who, as St. Bernard reminded Pope Eugene, came on earth not to do his own will. In fact, those orders of the Temple and of St. John of Jerusalem, like the religious orders in general, owed their virtues to the total eradication of selfishness from their members. No one thought of his own but of the general good, which merely formed part of the interest of the universal church. The verses of St. Columban, addressed to his monks are to this effect:

"Non sibi quis vivat; Christo sed vivat ubique.
Non tua, sed Christi quæras, qui diligis illum.
Non te, non mundum, Christum sed dilige solum."

Now, during the ages of faith, the spirit of the monastic orders was the spirit of perfection, to which all men knew that they were called, though its external form might depend upon their social position; and, as Richard of St. Victor says, "perfection consisting in divine love required that men should do nothing from their own will, but commit all things to the divine disposition. All their vows, all their desires must hang on the divine nod."‡ To use the language of Æschylus, all their trust was placed in *τῶν θεῶν ὑψίστου Δία*, Him who brings events to their issue.§ "The philosophers," says St. Ambrose, "used to distinguish between the honestum and the utile, including under the

latter all that related to the goods of this life. But we measure all things by the single formula of what is honest and decorous, 'nihilque utile nisi quod ad vitæ illius æternæ prosit gratiam definimus, non quod ad delectationem presentis.'** In Paradise, too, Dante represents the saints as still having more regard to the blessedness of others than of their own. Thus, describing the amen which followed from either choir, when told that their dead bodies should be restored to them, he adds, that it arose

"Not for themselves, but for their kindred dear,
Mothers and sires, and those whom best they
lov'd,
Ere they were made imperishable flame."†

I am aware, indeed, that in the very lives of the saints themselves, and in the whole ground of their sanctity, the modern philosophers imagine that they discover the action of the principle which is condemned by them in theory. They believe them to be eminent in the qualities which they cultivate from selfish motives; and repeat the suggestion respecting Job, "numquid Job frustra timet Deum?" concluding with Epictetus, that we generally find piety where there is utility.

"Of a truth," says the good Franciscan, John of Bordeaux, after citing these words, "He does not approach to the purity of Christianity: he pretends that piety takes its birth in utility, so that it is interest which gives rise to devotion. Yes, among the profane, but not among Christians, who, being acquainted with the maxims of our holy religion, have no other end but to serve God, for his love and for his glory; forgetting all considerations of their own advantage, they aspire to attain to that devotion which is agreeable to Him, without any view to their own interest."‡

Only observe what passes around you. Is it when men are thinking of themselves and of their own temporal interests that they approach to the Christian mysteries? No, but they repair to them either to exercise or to acquire the spirit of self-sacrifice. It is when they are in a disposition to give up every thing, honour, esteem, and life itself, that the altar of God has an attraction which they cannot resist. Some modern philosophers have remarked this fact, and their admiration

* Ægidius Romanus de Regim. Principum, I. 1. 14.

† Stimul. Amoris, Pars II. 6.

‡ De Gradibus Violentæ Charitatis.

§ Eumenid. 28.

* S. Ambrosii Officiorum, Lib. I. cap. 9.

† XIV.

‡ Epictet. Chrest. 233.

does them infinite honour, though their explanation is deficient.

"All these men," says Fichte, "martyrs, confessors, apostles of nations, heroes, conquerors, men of science, all have sacrificed their personal existence for an idea. What was their reward? They have gained an entrance into a new vital atmosphere, of intellectual clearness and translucency, which makes them utterly incapable of enjoying a life in any other element of being. They need no compensation, they have gained an inestimable prize." He discerns that it was the spirit of self-sacrifice which produced all this. "For who," he continues, "were the foremost in giving the countries of modern Europe a shape in which they were worthy to be the abode of civilized nations? History makes answer: they were religious men, who, in the steadfast belief that it was the will of God that the wild fugitive in the woods should be brought to a life of order, and to the blessed knowledge of a benevolent duty, left the lands of their birth, and all the sensuous and spiritual gratifications they afforded; left their families, their friends, and kindred, encountered want and hardship, and often died the death of martyrs, and all this for the sake of an idea, and in this idea for the sake of mankind."

"And should any object to me, that they sacrificed their present life in the expectation of an infinitely higher beatitude in heaven, which they hoped to earn by their endurance and their toil, that is, that they sacrificed one pleasure to another, the less to the greater, so that they cannot justly be deemed to have acted in the spirit of self-sacrifice, I would entreat such an objector well to weigh the following considerations. How did they attain to this firm faith in another world, a faith which they attested by their sacrifices? And what, in fact, is this faith, considered as an act of the soul? Does not the soul, which assumes the undoubted existence of another world, and clings to it with an immoveable faith, in this very act make a sacrifice of the present world? And is not this faith of itself the sacrifice completed and fulfilled once for all within the soul? which inward act of the spiritual life is afterwards made manifest in a variety of outward actions. Granting that there is nothing at all marvellous in their sacrificing everything, after they once believed in an everlasting life; granting that it is all perfectly intelligible, and that the objector himself would do the same in the

same situation; the marvel, however, is, that they did so believe; and this, the slave of self and sense, who is incapable of withdrawing his eyes from the present world, will never be able to do; he will never be able to put himself into the same situation!" So far the German philosopher who has had the advantage of finding one, perhaps, still greater than himself, to give his thoughts expression in our language. The Catholic religion, however, enabled men to place the question on a clearer basis, and to determine it with more precision and justice.

The spiritual guides of the middle ages left men no choice between the contending opinions of the ancients, respecting the motives and end of virtuous actions. "All will void of the will of God, that is," continues the author of *Theologia Germanica*, "all self-will, and whatever proceeds from self-will, is sin. As long as a man seeks his own good, and that which is best for himself as his own good, and as for himself, that he never finds; for as long as he seeks thus, he does not seek what is best for himself, so far is he from finding it; for as long as a man is thus disposed he seeks himself, and he thinks that himself is that greatest good: and man is not the greatest good as long as he seeks himself."* On the other hand, a man should love himself in God. Here the religious innovators went again astray, and then came the sophists, beginning by an extravagance, and because it is true that the best men thus love themselves, concluding that they love only themselves: from all which absurdity the Catholic school was free. Thus we find it was reserved for Christian moralists, and those too, during the ages of monastic learning, to decide that abstruse question respecting the motives of action which so much perplexed and divided the ancients, and which the apostate of Erfurt revived in a new form, deciding it directly in contradiction to the unerring text. Cicero, after remarking that the stoics separated what was honest from what was convenient, "*non nomine, sed genere toto*," and that the Peripatetics combined them together, proceeds to add with more judgment and acuteness than modern philosophers have evinced in relation to the same point, "*hæc est non verborum parva, sed rerum permagna dissensio*."[†] That difference should now be considered as for ever set at rest, by the

* Cap. 42.

+ De Nat. Deorum, Lib. I. 7.

Catholic philosophers. Manzoni considers what ought to be the national idea of disinterestedness as opposed to the exaggerated and chimerical sense which is sometimes attached to it, in order to ascertain what influence self-interest should exercise in morality; for Sismondi condemned the Catholic motive of giving alms for the sake of one's own soul. "Remark," says Manzoni, "the progress of this exaggeration within the mind which commits it. Disinterestedness," it begins, "is shown when to perform a just action, a man sacrifices some present pleasure, or incurs some pain which he might have avoided. The greater the sacrifice the more, disinterested is the action, and vice versâ. All the pleasures which may enter for motives to the action, will diminish its merit, and give it a character of egotism. All the pleasures and the hopes of pleasure, of whatever order or in whatever time, all that in the last analysis signifies pleasure, as promises, rewards, felicity, will render it less disinterested and consequently less virtuous." Here begins the error which is against an eternal law of the human soul, against a condition of intelligence and of justice,

*τίς γάρ ἐσθλὸς οὐχ αὐτῷ φίλος;**

or, as the English Sophocles saith, "Love, loving not itself, none other can." This doctrine proposes as perfection what is impossible. The condemnation which is asso-

* *Œdip. Col. 275.*

ciated with the idea of pleasure arises only from knowing that there are many pleasures opposed to duty. To push this condemnation to the general idea of pleasure, is to employ a noble sentiment to authorize an error and to reject an idea, although it is separated from the quality which alone made it worthy of rejection. When the word interested is transferred to the future life, it assumes wholly a different signification. What does a Christian mean by the good of his soul? Considering it in another life he means a felicity of perfection, a repose which consists in being absolutely according to order, in loving God fully, in having no other will but his; in being exempt from every grief because exempt from every inclination to evil; and with regard to the present life he means a felicity of progress to perfection, an advance in order and in the hope of joining the other state. This is the sense of the profound admonition of St. Paul to Timothy, "*Pietas autem ad omnia utilis est, promissionem habens vitæ quæ nunc est, et futuræ.*" It is impossible to propose a more noble view for the moral conduct of man.*

I think it has now been shown clearly that the morality of the ages of faith was heroic, and that its heroism so far from resembling the extravagance of modern writers, was as rational and solid as it was generous. Let us pass on to consider other features essential to the morality of the Catholic Church.

* *Osservaz. sulla Morale Cattolica, 239.*



CHAPTER VII.

AT the time when Charlemagne was entrenched on the banks of the Ora at Wolmerstede, in East Saxony, the infidel prince Wedekind is related to have repaired to the royal camp in the disguise of a beggar, not through fear, as he was then reconciled, but in order to scrutinize the manners of the Christians. The paschal solemnities were at hand, and the king and all the host were commemorating the Lord's passion. Having crossed the river he joined the multitude of poor persons who daily flocked to court, but on the holy day of Easter when he applied for alms, he was recognised, and asked by the king what were the motives which had induced him to come in a manner so unworthy of his rank. He confessed that it was curiosity which had prompted him, in order to examine into their lives and customs. "Permit me now," said he, "most serene king, to demand what is it that hath this day so much delighted you? You appeared during the last few days wholly cast down, oppressed with sorrow, and I could not discover the cause, and lo, I beheld you this morning in your temple full of gladness and rapture, and so sudden and complete a change excites my astonishment?" The king then explained to him the great mysteries of faith, and showed him the ground of his lamentation and of his joy.* This little narrative will prepare you, reader, for the observations that I have now to offer; for you may perceive from it that sensible and deep impressions were made upon the minds of men during the ages of faith by supernatural motives; and it is my present object to show that the justice imparted to those who hungered and thirsted after perfection in this life was divine, and the whole tenor of morality of ages of faith, supernatural both in its motives and in its effects, superior and even perhaps sometimes contrary to what men would have conceived or practised, if left without the assistance of an express and positive revelation of their Creator's will. For though the natural law

is promulgated to man as soon as he comes to the use of reason,* and though he is wisely exhorted, by poets as well as by philosophers, to withdraw himself from ways that run not parallel to nature's course, yet in consequence of the incapacity of that law to meet the disarrangement introduced by sin into the original order, and from the uncertainty in which he stands respecting what is the direction of nature's course, from which corrupt passions are continually drawing him aside, a new law had become necessary for the government and restoration of his fallen state, and additional light was required to enable him to discern what was the original design, and the true principles, the observance of which was indispensable for the perfection and felicity of his nature. Savanorola was true to the Catholic faith in teaching the philosophers of Italy, that the Christian life could not have its roots in the natural love of man, or in the sensitive parts of his nature, or in the imagination; nor again in the natural light of reason, for then faith would be only an opinion, nor in the influence of any natural cause, since the whole Christian life is spiritual, and independent of the body, and capable of universal practice; but that the root and foundation of the Christian life, is the grace of God, which is a supernatural gift infused into the soul. This was the Catholic doctrine acutely maintained. Those, indeed, whom, as the church says, "God had purged from all ancient corruption, and rendered capable of the holy novelty,"† had not cast off the grace and beauty of nature. The natural law was not abrogated; for to have supposed that God does not require its observation would have been the same thing as to suppose that it had no existence, which is absurd.‡ That the Christian character, though in this sense supernatural, retained all that was truly amiable and good in the ancient manners, is admitted in the reply of the Pagan father of Cymodoce to Lathenes the Christian, in the celebrated work, entitled

* Alber Krantzii Metrop. Lib. I.

* Ligorio Theolog. Lib. I. Tract. I.

† Third Collect for Holy Week.

‡ La Hogue Tractat. de Religione, I. 2.

the Martyrs, which paints with such historical fidelity the two societies which were dividing the world. "You appear to me," says the admirer of the Homeric life, "to be wholly of the ancient times, although I have not seen your words in Homer! Your silence has the dignity of that of the sages. You rise to sentiments full of majesty, not on the golden wings of Euripides, but on the celestial wings of Plato. In the midst of your sweet abundance you enjoy the graces of friendship. There is nothing about you forced or strained; all is content, persuasion, love."* Would you see this exemplified in history? Read the public and domestic life of Ferdinand and Isabella, in the Chronicles of Spain, by Lucius Marinæus, the Sicilian. What admirable pictures have you there! What Homeric simplicity! What tenderness! What poesy in all the detail of manners!† Manzoni has admirably treated on the correspondence between Catholic morals with the natural sentiment of right and justice;‡ the union and harmony of which are proved by the testimony not alone of history and experience, but also of ancient philosophers.

There are Pagan moralists to whom we might have recourse in order to shame the admirers of the natural and passionate character; for even the manners of the blessed meek are recommended by an ancient Aristotelian philosopher, who makes mildness consist in being able to bear insult and neglect, and in not being quickly moved to anger, but having a sweetness of address and an imperturbable tranquillity in the soul, exempt from all desire of contention. Still it is no less true, that the morality of the Catholic society during ages of faith, if conformable to nature, in its original state, or Homeric, according to the ideal of poets and philosophers, was something also beyond and often even contrary to what was actually in the thoughts of man. Real humanity and goodness can have no existence without the action of an influence superior to nature; and this the poet discerns, saying,

—"by grace divine,
Not otherwise, O nature! we are thine."§

It is men of natural virtues who fill the world with crimes and woe, for they are passion's slaves, and therefore their virtues

are not sure and constant. Homer perceived what was the highest praise, and investing his hero with divine virtue, styles him *πολύλητον*, which is the very character that is formed by the supernatural principles of the Catholic faith, and in perfection by them alone. Christian severity and Christian love are intimate relations, and therefore to the voluntary mortifications which we observed in a former book, to those spiritual and sacramental communions with God, not as reigning in heaven, but as suffering in his passion, the justice, the divine patience of the ages of faith must mainly be ascribed. With natural indulgence, you have hatred, jealousy, pride, and cruelty, for without an initiation into the mysteries of faith, from which springs the principle of the supernatural life, what is conformable to corrupt nature, or as Pindar says, "what is natural must, generally, prevail."

τὸ δὲ φύκῃ κρᾶτιστον ἔπαιν.*

"Hæc curare voluit Socrates, carare potest Deus. O quam miserum animal homo est," continues Marsilius Ficinus, "nisi aliquando evelet super hominem, commendat videlicet seipsum Deo. Deum amet propter Deum et cætera propter ipsum. Hæc unica problematum illorum solutio est, requiesque malorum."†

"I have remarked," says Bossuet, "that the apostle, speaking of those who love themselves and their pleasure, calls them 'men cruel, without affection, without pity;' and I have been often astonished at so strange a union. In fact, this blind attachment to pleasure seems at first to be something gentle, that would shun cruelty and malevolence; but one is soon undeceived, and able to detect in this apparent gentleness, a malignant and pernicious sweetness. When I hear voluptuous persons speak in the Book of Wisdom, I can find nothing more smiling and agreeable; they speak of nothing but flowers and feasting, dancing and amusement. 'Let us crown our heads with flowers before they are faded.' They invite all the world to partake of their pleasures. How sweet are their words! how joyous their temper! how desirable their company! But attend to the conclusion of this discourse. 'Let us oppress the just and the poor; let us not pardon either the widow or the orphan.' What a change is here, Christians, and who would

* Liv. 2.

† De Reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. XXI.

‡ Osservazioni sulla Morale Cattolica, cap. V.

§ Wordsworth.

* Olymp. IX.

† Epist. Lib. I. to Landino.

have expected so unpitiable a cruelty from such sweetness? This is the genius of pleasure; it loves to oppress the just and the poor; the just who are contrary to it, the poor who are to be its prey.*

The Stoics said that the end of philosophy was to live according to nature, and the moderns, with a false idea of nature, say the same; but Plato, with higher wisdom and greater subtlety of penetration, maintained that it was to be made conformable to God, in which position he did but forestall the fundamental law of Catholic morals. The heresy of our age is the idolizing of nature, of the creature over the Creator. Whatever, we are told, is conformable to nature, and to nature as we find it, is right. "How times are changed!" cries a holy Benedictine of the present day, "our fathers sometimes followed the vicious impulses of corrupt nature through weakness, in our philosophic age they are followed by system."† "Among nations which have departed from the principles of faith, we find," as Ventura justly remarks, "that ethics, and all sacred discipline, have given way along with theology, and that a certain rational system of ethics has been substituted for that which derived its force from God, in the same manner as what is so falsely termed rational Christianity, was substituted for positive, in which the private reason was not guided by divine discipline, but divine discipline by private reason."‡ Hence the astonishment and offence evinced by the moderns whenever presented with any of the especial virtues of the Catholic morality; for there are virtues which belong to it in a peculiar manner, having been, as it were, first revealed by the Gospel. The heathens felt the same surprise when they first beheld the fruits of divine faith; and St. Chrysostom had to show how little many who were called Christians differed from Pagans, either in their practice, or even in their notions of virtue.§ The disciples of the modern school seem at the best only in the number of those amongst whom Virgil counted himself, when guiding Dante—men

rosity, courage, friendship? If they love those only who love them, what is this but to follow the impulse of nature? No mysteries are required to teach that love; the Gentiles practised it. When do they love their enemies, obey men for God's sake, perform works of humility, and take up their cross? They are generous, brave, and moral; but so were Alcibiades, Achilles, and Julian. The heathen Saxons appeared at Rome, like their descendants at the present day, with the countenances of angels; but what the Catholic discipline required was that men should have the minds of angels, and possess that interior life which is implied in the various supplications in the divine prayer of our Redeemer, which used to be on every tongue. St. Theresa, in her, "Way of Perfection," examines each of these petitions, with a view to determine who are the persons that can repeat it with consistency. Clearly, it is more than mere human virtue which can justify men in calling God their father dwelling in heaven; which can enable them truly to hallow his name, to wish for the coming of his kingdom, and accomplishment of his will. Nature of herself feels not the want of that daily bread, nor can she unassisted plead for mercy on the ground of having herself forgiven. Instead of wishing to be delivered from temptations, she daily impels men to search for them. Nor is there any evil from which she desires to be delivered, excepting disease, loss of property, the death of the body, or other calamities to which our frail and wretched flesh is heir. True, as St. Augustine says, speaking of the Romans, "they who refrain shameful lusts, not by the faith of piety emanating from the Holy Spirit, and by the love of intellectual beauty, but by the desire of human praise and glory, are not indeed holy, but less vile."† Unquestionably there is much that is brilliant, and at times fascinating in the natural manners of men, and somewhat that seems austere and repulsive in those of Catholicism, though after all what do the virtues, and accomplishments, and transports of the worldly race amount to? These are admirable men, we are told; but what is there in them admirable, if you approach nearer? What is there enviable? Read the testimonies collected by that anatomist of melancholy, who with all his pretensions to sit alone, was himself but one of the sad choir, and then methinks you will be less anxious to institute a comparison, with the view of

"Who the three holy virtues put not on,
But understood the rest."||

What are their accomplishments and graces,
but those of the Gentiles—probity, gene-

* *Serm. sur l'Impénitence finale.*

† *Jamin. Traité de la Lecture Chrét. 118.*

‡ *Ventura de Methodo Philosophandi, cap. II. art. 7.*

§ *On Compunction, Lib I. cap. 4.*

|| *Purg. VII. 31.]*

• *De Civit. Dei, Lib. V. 13.*

coming to a conclusion unfavourable to the effects of the supernatural morals inculcated by the Catholic religion. No; whenever the morality of the ages of faith is superseded by the manners of rationalism, the event, however it may be qualified, amounts, in fact, to the erecting the standard of Satan, naturally so glorious in the eyes of Adam's evil brood, and beating down that of Christ, which is, according to the same nature, its scorn and aversion. It is the triumph of ambition over humility, of pride over meekness, of pleasure over the mourning of the just, of vain-glory over justice, of hatred over charity, of lust and excess over purity and temperance, of passion and revenge over the spirit of forgiveness, and sacrifice, and peace, in imitation of the Lamb of God; in a word, it is the substitution of human misery for the beatitude announced and everlastingly imparted by the Gospel.

Yielding to philosophy all that truth and justice required, the Catholic writers, from the beginning, declared that the morality which was to accompany and verify faith, must be in its motives, in its end, and in its discipline, something far different from what is ordinarily understood by nature, in the thoughts and language of men. The laudable Roman disposition was a favourite expression in the mouths of the heathens in St. Augustin's time, and we hear the great doctor exclaiming, "*O indoles Romana laudabilis! O offspring of the Reguli, the Scævolas, the Scipios, the Fabricii, if any thing in you shines naturally laudable, only by true piety can it be purged and perfected.*"* "*Si enim veræ virtutes sunt,*" he adds, "*quæ nisi in eis quibus vera inest pietas esse non possunt;*"† for the virtues which seem to be such, unless referred to God, are rather vices than virtues. However true and worthy they may be thought, yet if they be referred to themselves, and to nothing higher, they are inflated and proud, and therefore are to be judged vices, not virtues.‡ "*Sometimes,*" says St. Augustin, "*the most open vices are conquered by other hidden vices, which are thought to be virtues, in which reign pride, and a certain ruinous altitude of pleasing oneself; superbia et quædam sibi placendi altitudo ruinosa. Then only are vices conquered where they are conquered by the love of God.*"§ This is the novel morality to which the Church alludes, when she prays that men may be

purified from all the encroachments of their former ways, and made capable of a holy renovation.* This is that way of the cross, that life of obedience, that felicitous state, which is compared by the writers of the middle age to a garden of flowers, more beautiful than ever met mortal eye, and embalmed with a celestial fragrance. "*Here,*" says Thomas à Kempis, "*all things are bright, flourishing, odoriferous, and delightful. These flowers of the mysteries of Christ and his blessed mother, have so sweet an odour, so wondrous a flavour, so great a beauty, so powerful an ardour, that they expel from the languishing soul all temptation and carnal love, all anger and indignation, all envy and pride, all indolence and indifference, all hardness and perturbation, all sadness and distrust, all wickedness and deceit, all turpitude and diabolic influence, alike from a man or a woman, from a youth or an old man, from a rich or a poor man, because Christ died to heal all men and to cleanse all men from sin.*"†

History can bear witness that in the middle ages, to every profession and mode of life there was a supernatural standard proposed, and that unless sanctified and directed by a divine motive, no state or employment was deemed secure from a fatal end. Giles of Colonna shows, that in the government of himself, and of his family, and of his kingdom, a king must not place his happiness in pleasure or riches, or honour, or glory, or fame, or civil power, for then he would be only superficially good; but that he must place it in the love of God and in works which are the proofs of love.‡ "*We entreat our Saviour, in whose name we are here assembled,*" says Alexander, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Telesi, in the kingdom of Naples to king Roger, "*that he may cause you so to govern your kingdom that you may hereafter possess the eternal kingdom. For what did it profit Saul to possess the temporal kingdom by divine will, when afterwards he lost both; or what the Roman emperors Augustus and Domitian, and others, to have reigned over the universal world? That you may avoid such an end, magnify and serve God, and study to please him, and if it be asked in what manner a king should govern so as to please God, we answer, a nation is rightly and well administered, when by the force of law all wickedness is expelled. Remember*

* *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. II. 29.

† *Id.* Lib. XIX. 4.

‡ *Id.* XIX. 25.

§ *Id.* XXI. 16.

* Collect. 3rd fer. in holy week.

† *Sermonum* III. Pars 7.

‡ *Ægid. Romanus de Regim. Princ.* P. I. Lib. I.

that you bear the name of king in order that all under your dominion may be governed with the censure of justice in the bond of peace. Therefore be prudent, brave, and invincible. Moreover, with all vows we entreat you to be mindful of your condition, to have in your mind the Lord your creator, to know that he is your king, who is the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, in whose hands are all the ends of the earth, who alone is to be feared and adored, in whom we live, and move, and from whose bounty you have all that you possess. In the Gospel, Truth saith to his disciples, 'Sine me nihil potestis facere;' and if we must believe that the disciples Peter and Paul, Andrew, and the other apostles, without him could do nothing, how much more all we who in comparison with them are as nothing! Let not, then, thy heart be ever lifted up like the king of Babylon, but remember David the holy king, and imitate him, who was lowly in his own eyes, who though possessed of the kingdom of Israel, without contradiction danced before the ark of the Lord. Follow this humility, that with David you may pass from a kingdom to a kingdom, and from an empire which ends with time, may be removed to that heavenly empire in which, with Jesus Christ our Lord, you may deserve to reign for evermore."*

To this representation of the kingly office in the twelfth century the type of every other condition was analogous. In no state were mere natural virtues or natural motives deemed sufficient. "What hope have merchants?" asks the disciple in a dialogue ascribed to St. Anselm. The master replies, "Small; for by fraud and perjury they acquire the greatest part of what they gain. Do they not frequently visit holy places and give great alms? They do all this in order that God may increase their goods, and that they may preserve them, and in these they have their reward; for of such men it is said, qui confidunt in multitudine divitiarum suarum. Like sheep they shall be brought down, and death shall feed upon them. What do you think of various artificers? Looking at the difficulties of their state, he replies, nearly all perish, for they work iniquity. Have players and jesters hope? None: for with intention they are ministers of Satan. Of them it is said, Deum non cognoverunt: Deus sprexit eos. The number of the saved will be few, but yet Christ will gather his elect from men of all classes, as he hath already assumed some from

amongst thieves." What more legitimate in nature's eye than the pursuit of pleasure, if it can be obtained without injuring others? Yet the justice of the Catholic discipline was not satisfied with that limitation, for cupidity was defined by Raban Maur to be the desire of enjoying any thing, not on account of God.*

It is related of Atticus, that his humanity and goodness did not spring from nature alone, which we all obey, but also from learning. "He did these things," says a Roman author, "not alone through nature, but also from principle; for he had so imbibed the principles of the chief philosophers, that he made use of them to direct his life, and not for the sake of ostentation. He was a great imitator of the manners of his ancestors, and a lover of antiquity, which he understood thoroughly and explained in several books, than which nothing can be sweeter to those who have any desire of being acquainted with illustrious men." Making the proper substitutions, we may say it was thus with Catholic manners in the ages of faith. The force of traditionary duties and modes of life was felt in every rank of society, so that few could wholly resist it. While it was the object of legislators to establish a harmony between the moral destiny of man and his social condition, it was felt as the honour of families to transmit from generation to generation, rules and customs, and manners corresponding to the doctrines and spirit of the Catholic Church. Let us hope that the justice and propriety which belong to the genuine manners of a Catholic state, which are of custom, not of invention, social not individual, may never be worn out and forgotten amongst us, that in our cities some few aged ones may even still be found in whom the old-time chides the new. It is not by a written law or private speculation that early hours, assiduity in the church morning and evening, simplicity and peace in all the detail of domestic life, personal familiarity with the poor, catholicity in conversation and habits of living, such as we find it in countries where it is generally diffused, can be enforced. It is by the tradition of families and the force of common opinion and example. Reader, this wish will be for yourself and for all that can make life dear to you; for after having once had experience of the supernatural manners of Catholic society, would it not be tearful, like being

* Alexand. Abb. de Rebus Gest. Rogerii.

* Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, Lib. III. cap. 13.

ejected from Paradise, and commanded to wander over a land of malediction, to be obliged to return to the cold, monotonous and uninspiring formalities of naturalism or of rationalism, as in countries which have lost faith, and to join that society in which, as its wise poet complains,—

—“To-morrow unbelied may say,
I come to open out for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday:”*

which knows of no morning sacrifice, no holy nights, no calm retreats from the world, no evening meditations in solemn churches, no smiling salutations like those of the Spaniards on entering a house, who used to begin by saying, “Ave Maria purissima,” no union of the visible and invisible in customs and views of action, no sanctification of hours, or of enjoyments, of the duties and of the regrets of life? When the sound of the bell which precedes the blessed sacrament was heard within the theatres of Madrid, spectators and actors all without exception, used to fall upon their knees. Bourgoign, who mentions this, adds, “that it is difficult not to laugh.” Unhappy the man, unhappy, if it were only because the whole type in his intelligence must be contrary to that which yields pure joy to the human heart, who at such a spectacle has smiles and disdain to hide instead of tears, and the sudden movements of veneration and love.

The supernatural character of the Catholic morality was also seen in the motives which prompted it; and here one might remark how little progress has been made in judicial virtue since the days when the duties of the Christian magistrate were taught by a Capuchin friar, Ives of Paris. We find that men of the middle ages were continually referring to religion for the cause even of political actions. When Guillaume de Villardouin was made prisoner by the emperor Michael Paleologus, he was offered his freedom, and money to purchase lands in France, if he would renounce his principality of the Morea. William at first proceeded to show that the feudal system did not leave it in his power to compromise the rights of others, but finally he was induced, after a long imprisonment, to yield three towns to the emperor. The Franks, however, in the Morea, met in general assembly, refused to ratify the cession. The duke of Athens

in a noble speech, offered to become a prisoner in the place of William, but protested against surrendering the bulwarks of the Morea. “I deplore his captivity,” said he, “but such a price for his liberty would endanger the liberty of the whole people.” In conclusion he used these impressive words in reference to the example of Christ. “The supreme justice does not will that all should be sacrificed for the safety of one, but rather that one for all should perish.” The security and perseverance of the Catholic justice was another proof that it was above nature. How many men are thought to be meek merely from their being insensible to the divine honour, and untried in what regards themselves. To the false meek, to those who are only by nature moderate and pacific, St. Bernardine of Sienna applies the prophet’s words, “Tange montes, et fumigabunt.” Only oppose their own will, and the least contradiction will raise a tempest where you thought had reigned a perpetual serenity. “O, what a precious good is endurance,” cries Marsilius Ficinus, in his letter to John Cavalcanti. “This alone made Socrates the wisest of the Greeks: this is obtained by that view and remembrance of divine and eternal things, which renders all the glory of the world vain and vile.” But in nothing does the supernaturalism of the Catholic morals appear more eminent than in their opposition to the sensual ideal, which, no doubt, furnishes the true explanation of the cause of that mortal hate otherwise unaccountable, with which the holy Church of God has been always regarded by the profane. “The opposition of body and soul,” as Novalis observes, “is one of the most remarkable and dangerous things. In history it has played a great part.”* “All men,” he adds, “are engaged in a perpetual duel.”† “There is a separation,” as Frederick Schlegel remarks, “not merely between ourselves and the external world, but there is a division also within ourselves, and in our inmost nature, a separation of conscience from thought. This pervades the whole of human life, both states and families, in faith and knowledge, judgment and inclinations, reason and will, reason and fancy.”‡ How clearly men illuminated by holiness in the middle ages, had discerned what this philosopher

* Wordsworth.

* Schriften, II. 314.

† Id. II. 284.

‡ Philosophie der Sprache, 23.

speaks of, may be witnessed in the dialogue between Reason and Conscience, which Jacoponus inserts among his sublime rhapsodies.* Neither were the ancients blind to this phenomenon. The Pythagoreans used to speak of a double form of human nature inherent from generation, as if there were another animal joined to it, and hence a constant contention within ourselves.† “Of all victories,” says Clinias in Plato, “the first and best is the conquering one’s self; and the most disgraceful and miserable defeat is the being conquered by one’s self.”‡

“Tu si animum vicisti, potius quam animus te, est quod gaudeas.

Qui animum vincunt, quam quos animus, semper probiores client.”

So speaks Plautus.§

Cicero says, “religuum est ut tute tibi imperes: quamquam hoc nescio quo modo dicatur, quasi duo simus ut alter imperet, alter pareat, non inscite tamen dicitur.”|| Frederick Schlegel illustrates his position by referring to the dramatic development and representation of thought in the works of Plato, which has so completely assumed the conversational form, that if the superscription and name of the persons, all address and reply, and in general, the colloquial form, were suppressed, the whole would nevertheless remain a dialogue, in which every answer suggests a new question flowing on in an alternate living stream of discourse and reply, or rather of thought and counter thought. This internal conversational form is essential to all living thought and to its delivery, so that the connected, uninterrupted discourse of one individual may be assumed as a conversation.¶ If we follow this dialogue with attention, we shall discover that as far as the sphere of morals is implicated, the two contending parties which agitate the external world are duly represented within ourselves. In fact they are found playing the same part, taking and retaking castles, professing war or treacherous neutrality, overthrowing or restoring thrones within the little world of each man’s soul. In this spiritual contest they of the holy discipline are all like the Greeks of Homer.

* Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. VI. p. 83.

† Jamblich. *Adhortat. ad Philosoph.* cap. 3.

‡ Plato, *de Legibus*, I.

§ Trinum. II. 2.

|| Tuscul. II. 20.

¶ Id. 60.

οἷσιν ἄρα Ζεὺς
ἐκ νεότητος ἔδωκε καὶ ἐς γῆρας πολυτεύειν
ἀργαλέους πολέμους.*

The regard which the Romans entertained for chastity appears in the laws relative to the sanctuary of Fortuna Muliebris.

“In the pagan rites,” says St. Augustin, “it is said there were, I know not what whispers breathed into the ears of a few and delivered as a secret religion, that chastity and probity of life should be pursued.† When and where,” he adds, “they heard the precepts of sacred celestial chastity we know not.”‡ The Greek poet styles chastity “the most beautiful gift of the gods.”

στέργοι δέ με σωφροσύνα,
δώρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν.§

But the Christian revelation threw a new light upon the mysteries of our moral nature. “Although,” says St. Augustin, “there are so many different nations on the earth, living according to different rites and manners, and distinguished by variety of languages, arms, and habits; yet there are not more than two races of human society existing, which we may call two cities; the one consisting of men who live after the flesh, and the other of those who live after the spirit.”||

The passions, indeed, given to us with life, as long as they remain pure and unabused, are under the protection of angels; but no light unearthly is required to show that when corrupted or misdirected, they are subjected to the empire of dæmons, and made the ready instruments of every error and vanity that oppose themselves to justice. Thus reason suffices to teach that there is a virtuous love and a guilty love, a pernicious anger, and a holy anger, a criminal pride and a noble sense of dignity. But those whom Christ had repaired by the new light of his immortality could see farther. The flight of Christian souls was higher still; for that belief in millions of spiritual creatures walking the earth unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep, those images, those chaunts, those crowns and reliquaries guarding the soul from the poisoned shafts of the impure dæmon, as if with a buckler of diamonds, that cleanness of

* II. XIV. 85.

† De Civit. Dei, Lib. II. 6.

‡ II. 26.

§ Eurip. *Medea*, 635.

|| De Civitate Dei, Lib. XIV. cap. 1.

heart which suggests that revolted spirits must seem to resemble even in shape and outward signs their sin and place of doom obscure and foul, that affirmation of the prophet, "ye are gods, and all sons of the Most High," that maxim of the bright school, "Christianus alter Christus," without doubt produced an ideal of humanity corresponding to what was in the mind of God rather than to what was in the mind of man. Men of genius like Sir Philip Sidney, who set themselves, as in his letter to Queen Elizabeth, "against papists," indulged their imagination in the absence of the beauties of the angelic life, by forming the ideal of sensual excellence, as may be witnessed in his essay, entitled, "Valour Anatomized." This has always been and must ever continue the policy of those who attack the Catholic religion. Material is thus opposed to spiritual beauty, though the first is indebted to the latter for the attraction which it uses as a snare. As Novalis remarks, "the ideal of morality has no more dangerous rival than the ideal of the highest strength of the most powerful life, which is also termed the ideal of greatness. It is the maximum of barbarism : " so foreign to the spirit of the middle ages, that a great guide of the thirteenth century declared it more detestable to be intemperate than timid : * "but in these times of irregular cultivation, it has many adherents even amidst the utmost weakness. Through this ideal man would acquire a brute spirit and a brute intelligence."† Through this every thing belonging to the holy discipline of faith is seen in a distorted shape ; " O mortal lust ! thou canst not lift thy head above the waves which whelm and sink thee down."‡ At present the ideal of humanity in the whole development of human genius is animal, in the ages of faith it was angelical, and this of itself is quite sufficient to explain the difference between the manners and creations of the middle ages, and those of the modern civilization ; for the great heresy of latter times has been a gross application to manners of the principle of Jordano Bruno, who inculcated the identification of God with nature, that is, with nature in its present state. Many of the faithful seem not to be aware that if they consider their own ideal by the light of unim-

passioned reason, and even by that of the ancient philosophy, they would find it amply justified. Novalis, whose remarkable writings may be said to represent the testimony of the human intelligence, says, " We must keep the body as well as the soul in our power. The body is the instrument to form and modify the world : we must seek to form our body to all capacities. Modification of this is the modification of the world."* The Pythagoreans were exhorted to beware of pleasure as of a thing requiring the utmost caution, the source and instigator of all deceit and sin.† Aristotle said, that " it is brutish to indulge and delight in sensual pleasures, and that the most generous natures voluntarily refrain from them."‡ He shows that the grand object of virtue is to resist pleasure, since it is still more difficult to fight against pleasure than against anger, according to Heraclitus *περὶ δὲ τὸ χαλεπώτερον αἰεὶ καὶ τέχνη γίνεται καὶ ἀρετή*.§ From the works of Plato a sublime defence might be derived for those features of Catholic morals which seem most repugnant to the feelings of flesh and blood. Socrates, in that magnificent passage at the end of the Gorgias, where he describes the punishment of the wicked after death, says, " that the souls which have been defiled with lust and avarice, will then appear horribly disfigured, as if with great scars and wounds which these vile passions had left imprinted on them."|| Dionysius praises the manners of the first Romans on account of their abstemious life, being hardened against all enjoyment of pleasure ; and for their having estimated happiness by virtue not by fortune.¶ In expressing his admiration for Romulus, observing how austere he was, and how he hated all crime, he concludes with this remarkable expression, *καὶ πολλὰν ἔχουσα πρὸς τοὺς ἡρωικοὺς βίους ὁμοιότητα*.** In fact, according to Pindar it was the boast of Achilles, the type of heroism, that he had been imbued with the learning of Chiron, and that he had passed the first twenty years of his life in a cave, where he was educated by the chaste daughters of the centaur, to whom he never even uttered an unseemly word.††

* Schriften, II. 157.

† Jamblich. de Pythagoric. Vita, cap. 31.

‡ Ethic. Nic. Lib. III. cap. 10.

§ Id. Lib. II. 3.

|| Plato, Georgias.

¶ Antiquit. Roman. Lib. II. c. 11.

** II. c. 24.

†† Id. Pyth. Od. IV.

* Œgid. Rom. de Regim. II. 1. 16.

† Schriften, II. 285.

‡ Dante, Hell, XXVII.

Without doubt the heathen moralist in general knew little of that trial to which Hugo of St. Victor alludes, when he says that youth has to bear the burden and heat of the day, materially the weight of labour and heat of the sun, and morally the weight of the carnal fragility and heat of concupiscence.* Yet Euripides, in drawing the character of Hippolytus, furnished proof that the Greeks were capable of conceiving the beauty of such a character as that of a young man wholly innocent, unwilling to pollute his ears or eyes with any thing against modesty, *παρθένον ψυχὴν ἔχον*.† Nay, how well they understood the importance of guarding the senses with a view to the preservation of such virtue, may be collected from the double signification of the word *κόρη* with the Greeks, and the alliance between pupillæ and pupulæ with the Latins. We, indeed, have abundant testimonies from ancient authors, to the excellence of many of the supernatural features of Catholic manners during the ages of faith. Cicero, after alluding to the internal division which involves the necessity of self government, adds, "Est in animis omnium fere natura molle quiddam, demissum, humile, enervatum, quodammodo et languidum, senile. Si nihil aliud, nihil esset homine deformius."‡ And yet this is what the modern sophists would teach youth to follow! "Arrianus Maturius est princeps," says Pliny, "quum dico Princeps, non de facultatibus loquor, sed de castitate, justitia, gravitate, prudentia."§ The ancient philosophers even admit expressly the necessity of placing morals upon a supernatural basis, and of imparting motives to action higher than the mere principles of humanity. Varro thought it useful that brave men should fancy themselves sprung from the gods. "The human mind," he said, "in consequence of that persuasion, would undertake greater things, pursue them with more ardour, and perfect them with greater felicity." We no where meet

with an idea of morality independent of sacrifice and the fear of the Deity. Her-mippus says that Chiron the Centaur first led the race of mortals to justice, teaching them oaths and propitiatory sacrifices, and *καὶ σχήματ' Ὀλύμπου*.*

It is a singular fact, that even for the institution of confession, apparently so beyond mortal ken, there might be testimonies produced from some of the ancient philosophers. Plato enforces the duty of disclosing one's sin and injustice to others; and Plutarch speaks as follows, in his treatise entitled, "How to perceive one's Progress in Virtue." "As for those who voluntarily give themselves up to the men that will reprove them, who confess their errors, and who disclose their own poverty, not being at ease until it be known, not wishing to be secret, but confessing and praying those who reprove and admonish them to prescribe a remedy, such a conduct is certainly not one of the worst signs of amendment and of progress in virtue."

To this divine principle, which produced such an influence on Catholic manners, our attention must now be directed, which is an inquiry that will not lead us aside from the path of an historian; for the learned Scotti, in his Theory of Christian Politicks, remarks justly, that it is often necessary for a writer on civil government to enter upon doctrinal discussions, as in the very instance which calls for that observation, where he shows the utility which the state derives from the doctrines of purgatory and indulgence. There is no historian of Charles the Fifth, who has not been obliged to notice the curious petition of his Lutheran subjects, that by his imperial authority men might be compelled to return to the ancient discipline of confession, when experience had taught them that its abolition produced a visible deterioration in morals, and opened a prospect of interminable evils to society. To this point now, reader, let us therefore turn, and mark how just God decrees our debts be cancelled.

* De Clanstro Animæ, Lib. II. 14.

† 1006. ‡ Tuscul. II.

§ Epist. Lib. III. 2.

* Clemens Alexand. Stromat. Lib. I. c. 15.



CHAPTER VIII.



IN the symbol of our faith, immediately after the commemoration of the holy church, we find mention made of the remission of sins, because, as St. Augustin says, "it is only in fact by means of the remission of sins, that the church on earth can subsist."* Christ instituted the sacrament of penitential confession, and gave to men a power which belonged not to the angels, and which equalled his own, saying, "As my Father sendeth me, so send I you; whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you retain, they are retained;" words, which though never interpreted but in one sense by the Catholic church, have visibly embarrassed the great writers of other schools, from whose commentaries no one can ascertain what they thought respecting them, and who probably, indeed, had not a clear idea themselves of what they would maintain. The Catholic church, as the Master of the Sentences says, has always claimed and exercised the power of binding and loosing, which power is permitted to priests alone. "Rightly," saith he, "does the church which has true priests claim this authority, but heresy cannot claim it, which has not true priests."† Some have questioned the nature and method of confession in the primitive church, but it is clear from St. Cyprian, that men then confessed their thoughts.‡ Minucius Felix, addressing the idolaters, says, "apud nos et cogitare peccare est; vos, conscios timetis, nos etiam conscientiam solam, sine qua esse non possumus." It appears also that converts from heresy, like the old hermit Isidore, in the early church, used to confess the horrible secret sacrileges which they had committed against the blessed sacrament.§ "Grave vulnus est," says St. Augustin, "lethale, mortiferum; sed omnipotens medicus."|| "No

one," says Origen, "must blush to indicate his sin to the priest of the Lord, and to seek the medicine."* "What doth it signify," says St. Ambrose, "whether by penitence or by the washing of baptism, the priests vindicate this right granted to them? it is one and the same mystery in both, for the name of God worketh in penitence, as the grace of mysteries in baptism."† St. Cyprian speaks of every one confessing his sins to the priests;‡ but after the fourth Council of Lateran, confession became more frequent among the faithful, and chiefly by means of the exhortation of the regular clergy. When Dante was at Ravenna, the laity were admonished by the decrees of Rainaldo the archbishop, to have recourse to the sacraments at least on eight festivals in the year,§ but this was merely fixing a minimum, to ascertain who were worthy of the name of Christians. When the number of confessors was increased, it became expedient to compile books for their guidance, such as the Confessional of St. Bonaventura, and the sum of St. Raymond of Pennafert; though these were not altogether a novelty, for penitentials of the highest antiquity may be found in various collections. By means of these works the priest, without being obliged to recur to the canons, had everywhere a sure rule for his conduct in the important action of imposing the penance appropriate to each sin. The moderns, in condemning books of this kind, had against them even their own most esteemed authority. "I commend much," says Lord Bacon, "the deducing of the law of God to cases of conscience."||

St. Raymond the Dominican, in the thirteenth century, may upon the whole be considered as author of the first sum of moral theology. His work was excellent, but in subsequent times, many writers who undertook to form similar collections, treated the subject in such a manner as to provoke

* Enchirid. cap. XVII.

† Lib. IV. Sentent. distinct. 18, 19.

‡ Tract. de Lapsis.

§ Sophronii Pratum Spirit. cap. XXX.

|| Serm. CCCLII.

* Hom. II. in Levit.

† Lib. I. de Pœnitentia, cap. 8.

‡ De Lapsis, XII.

§ Hieron. Rubi Hist. Raven. Lib. VI.

|| Advancement of Learning.

the censures of the church. Mabillon scrupled not to prefer to some of them the book of Cicero de Officiis.* In this, however, he referred to obscure compilations, for the accusations which a celebrated philosopher adduced against some of the noblest and most perfect treatises, were ungrounded and calumnious.

The Pere Daniel, in reply to the provincial letters, has convicted Paschal of having falsified the text of the authors which he quoted, of having ascribed to them the opinions which they proposed only for the purpose of refutation, and of having condemned as novelties the doctrines of the holy fathers and of the Scripture. Assuredly such men as Azor, Suarez, Vasquez, Lessius, and Sanchez, needed not the light of Port Royal to reject the atrocious errors which he denounced with such eloquence.† The Marchioness of Sablé, who was then encompassed by it, asked Paschal on one occasion, if in reality he was sure that all he had written against the Jesuits was just? To whom he replied, "That it was for those who furnished him with the memoranda on which he worked to examine that point, and not for him who did nothing but arrange the materials which were placed in his hands." This is that sage sublime, the renown of whose great name hath echoed through the world, as if through his lips justice had once a voice on earth. Now, let his disciples say whether he needeth nothing but their praise.

Of public penance, there are memorable examples in history. Pope Fabian closed the church doors against the Emperor Philip, as did St. Martin against the Emperor Maximus, St. Ambrose against Theodosius, and St. Germain against King Aribert, until they were reconciled and made public confession. Louis le Debonnaire asked permission to perform public penance. It was then for the first time since the early examples, that one saw the great spectacle of the voluntary humiliation of a man invested with the supreme power. "This," says Michelet, "was a new era of morality, the accession of conscience." Nevertheless, the brutal pride of men blushed for royalty at the humble confession which it made of its own weakness;‡ and there have not been wanting historians in modern times to convert such examples, and, indeed, the whole discipline of peni-

tence, into ground for accusing the clergy of tyranny and pride, forgetting the obvious truth which Plato develops, that it is not consistent with nature that the pilot of a ship should ask the consent of the sailors to be directed by them, nor that the wise should go to the door of the rich. And he who can deliver such conceits, adds the great philosopher, lies; but nature commands that if a rich or a poor man be sick, that he should go to the door of the physician; and, in like manner, whatever is to be directed, must apply to those who are able to direct.*

Already, in another book, having spoken of the penitential exercises observed during the ages of faith, there is no occasion to dwell at present on the historical view of this subject; let us pass on, therefore, to philosophize briefly respecting the advantages of this institution, and to consider the objections to which it has given rise.

What is the state of man?—a wayfarer on earth, a member of the militant church, left with liberty, called to perfection, encompassed with obstacles, and having a twofold evil to combat? What is the probability of his obtaining that prize which is for the few who conquer, and of his being admitted to those regions of purity and imperishable joy into which nothing that is defiled can ever enter? Let us hear the axiom of the middle ages, "Quidquid fit contra conscientiam ædificat ad gehennam."† Yet St. Augustin makes a reflection still more appalling than this of Innocent. "Væ peccatis hominum," he exclaims, "qui sola inusitata exhorrescimus, usitata vero, pro quibus abluendis Fili Dei sanguis effusus est, quamvis tam magna sint, ut omnino claudi contra sese faciant regnum Dei, sæpe videndo omnia tolerare, sæpe tolerando nonnulla etiam facere cogimur."‡

St. Clemens Alexandrinus quotes an ancient poet, saying,

ὁ βίος ἀνθρώποις λογισμοῦ κάρημου δέται πάνν' ἔωμεν ἀριθμῷ καὶ λογισμῷ ταῦτα γὰρ σώζει βροτοὺς.

and, again, what is more remarkable from a Gentile,

οὐ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος τέχρην εὖρ', ὁ δὲ θεὸς ταύταν φέρει
ὁ δὲ γε τὰνθρώπου λόγος πέφυκ' ἀπὸ τοῦ θείου λόγου. §

* De Studiis Monast. Pars II. cap. VII.

† Entretiens d'Eudoxe et de Cleandre.

‡ Hist. de France, I. 362.

* De Repub. Lib. VI.

† Innocent III. in cap. litteras de Rest. Spol.

‡ Euchirid. cap. 70.

§ Stromat. Lib. V. 14.

It is even so. "Man has not judgment to direct his life," as Richard of St. Victor saith. "The quality of works deceives him, as when the prophet says, 'Væ qui dicitis bonum malum et malum bonum.' And he errs also in his estimate of quantity, to which the Psalmist alludes, when he saith, 'Mendaces filii hominum in stateris, ut decipiant ipsi de vanitate in id ipsum.' Who will find me a man that never errs in his estimate of quality or of quantity, who is never circumvented by the occupation—walking in darkness? Who neither wishes to be deceived nor to deceive? But where can man attain to this degree of judgment, while involved in darkness and dwelling in the region of the shadow of death? Truly this is impossible for every man, so long as the darkness rests on the face of the abyss, until He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, emitting his light and his truth, shall begin to divide light from darkness, and to make evening and morning, in order that man may be able to discern good from evil, and evil from good, good from better, and evil from worse, better from best, and worse from worst? Without supernatural help men cannot make 'the first step in the way of discretion,' which is to judge between day and night, that is, between good and evil. How, without a personal and authoritative application of the unerring text made through the sacrament of penance, can they hope to make the second, between night and night, or worse and evil, worse and worst; the third, between day and day, this is, between good and better, better and best; the fourth, which is to judge every night, or to know what is each sin; and the fifth, which is to judge every day, or to estimate justly every virtue?"* "Every hour," continues this great philosopher, "yea, each moment we are deceived in our estimation of things, and breaking the reins of equity we run loose to our desires. No moderation, no certain measure is preserved, while the mind is impelled to and fro, as in a whirlwind, by the impulse of the flesh. From the sole of the foot to the crown of the head there is no soundness. Happy the time, and desirable the hour, when no longer will any thought be deceived in its examination, any affection bridled in its desires."† "Moreover," he continues, "it is one thing to discuss what is good or

evil in itself, and another to deliberate what is expedient or not to some one individual. Find me," saith he, "a man who can show me some one thing which cannot be the cause of any evil to any one. What is there so good that it cannot be the occasion of fall, or what so evil that it cannot be an admonition of caution? Behold, therefore, how every heart is darkened to counsel."*

Against the dangers of this state of man, exposed to the impulse of his own heart and to the action of an external seducer, the Catholic church has been provided with a remedy in the sacrament of confession, by which men are not alone loosed, but directed and advised. The priest had a judicial power supernatural, but, besides that, he was in a position from which he could determine what was best for the penitent, who for himself might never have been able to determine with justice, since his mind would still be a mirror that reflected only himself. Always provided with a certain, positive rule of judging, the priest had a knowledge of human nature, beyond what could be possessed by other men.

"Often, too,
Through the long experience of his dayes,
Which had in many fortunes tossed beene,
And past through many perillous assayes,
He knew the diverse went of mortall wayes
And in the mindes of men had great insight;
Which with sage counsell, when they went
astray
He could enforme, and them reduce aright
And all the passions heale, which wound the
weaker sight."†

Will you hear those who speak from experience? "Woe to the man," cries Silvio Pellico, "who rejects confession, and who in order not to appear vulgar, thinks himself obliged to treat it with sarcasm. Is it not true, you ask, that as every one says, one ought to be good, it is useless to hear it repeated without ceasing? that meditation and reading suffice to the wants of the soul? No; the burning word of man has a power which neither reading nor meditation possess. The soul is more moved by it, the impressions from it are more profound. The voice of a brother hath a life and an applicability to the moment which we do not find either in our own thoughts, or in our books."‡ You find this mystery explained in the old verses of Alanus de Insulis—

* Richardi S. Victoris de Statu Interioris Hominis, Lib. I. l. c. 25, 26.

† Id. I. l. c. 34.

* Richardi S. Victoris de Statu Interioris Hominis, Lib. I. l. c. 28.

† Spenser, Vl. 6.

‡ Le Mie Prigioni, cap. LXXXIV.

"*Diversis diversa valent medicamina morbis:
Ut variant morbi, sic variantur ea.
Non uno doctrina modo se mentibus infert;
His timor, his monitis, his adhibetur amor.*"

Spenser paints the spiritual physician in the act of administering to the diseased soul:

"Then gan the palmer thus, 'most wretched man,
That to affection does the bridle lend:
In their beginning they are weake and wan,
But soone, through suff'rance, growe to feare-
full end,
Whiles they are weake, betimes with them con-
tend.'"

But what is to be said of that examination of the heart, and of that scrutiny of secret sins, which the practice of confession implied, and which the moderns represent as injurious to the freshness and purity of the mind? There are not wanting books to enable us to determine this question practically; † but in relation to history, we can best answer it from consulting the writers of the middle ages. Hugo of St. Victor, developing that every man is in Egypt by the consideration of himself, in the land of Israel by the contemplation of God, and in Judea by the edification of his neighbour, says, "it is useful to fly into Egypt, and behold the darkness of our infirmity, that the mind may not swell. And if the child Jesus, and his Virgin Mother be with us, the darkness will not overwhelm us; but though we should walk through the midst of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evils. Let us fly, then, into Egypt, and remain there till the death of Herod, till the end of our pride and our elation."‡ How great is the inconsistency of men! Those who object to the scrutiny of the heart in the secrets of confession, as a means of advancing to perfection, are generally the very persons who are addicted to resting in that view of themselves, without any farther object than to indulge in the vain pleasure or the sullen discontent inspired by what they find there. This was a weakness and a danger foreign from the Catholic morality. Under its influence men did not write books to paint themselves, in order that their image might be then admired and adored by others. God only was to be adored in the heart of man.§

* Book II. 4.

† Vide Drexelii Trismegistus Christianus, de Cultu Conscientiæ.

‡ Hugo S. Vict. ex Miscellan. Liv. III. 60.

§ Malebranche, Recherche de la Verité, Liv. II. c. 5.

Even for good they did not rest in self-contemplation. "Return to yourself," says Richard of St. Victor, "and keep your heart; but woe to you, if you remain there, instead of passing on to seek the highest good, which is God. Pass on; despise yourself, and you will realize the departure of Israel out of Egypt."* The human heart is an abyss of mystery, if you will only credit Homer, who says, "Many things obscure, Thestorides, but nought obscurer than the mind of man;"† and what dangers arise from it no one need be told. We have to contend not only against the passions of the body, but also against those of the mind. "In libidine esse, peccatum est etiam sine effectum." This is what even the Gentile moralist affirmed.‡ "The first study of a manly mind," says Richard of St. Victor, "ought to be how to govern its affections; and the second, how to command its thoughts."§ "Who can worthily apprehend," he continues, "who can sufficiently estimate, who does not tremble with awe and admiration, when he considers that multiplex volubility of human thought, that restless and unwearied velocity which traverses so many, so various, such infinite things, which rests no hour, no moment of time, which flies with such haste through so much space of locality and of ages, to which every where opens so easy a passage from the highest to the lowest, from the lowest to the highest, from first to last, and from last to first?"|| What need of a wise, and steady, and active personal direction, and what a school of wisdom may the mind be made, which is the seat of such admirable faculties? "The mind," says Richard of St. Victor, "knows nothing better, nothing more certain, nothing more sublime, than what it learns by experience, and perhaps this is the proper and especial, and above all, most sublime mode of learning, in the power of the soul, when we prove a thing by our own experience."¶ Hear how these men prescribed: "There comes into your mind," says St. Augustine, "an unlawful suggestion? It is the serpent's head: tread on it, and you will escape. But it speaks of gain, great gain, much gold:

* Richardi S. Victoris de Exterminatione Mali, Pars I. Tract. I. 6. + Epig. VI.

† Cicero, de Finibus, Lib. III. 9.

‡ Richard. S. Vict. de Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. I. c. 2.

§ Richardi S. Victoris, de Contemplatione, L. III. c. 21.

¶ De Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. I. c. 2.

you will be rich for ever! It is the serpent's head: tread on it. Perish the world's gain, rather than that a soul be lost."* This is what St. Benedict in his rule expresses, by dashing evil thoughts in their commencement against the rock which is Christ, according to the prophetic admonition of the Psalmist. "Again," saith Hugo of St. Victor, "many seek science, but few conscience; yet if they would seek conscience with as much study and solicitude as they do secular and vain science, it would be sooner acquired, and more usefully retained; for to think with conscience is consummate sense, and saving the reverence of wisdom, it is more useful to have recourse to conscience than to wisdom, unless it be that wisdom which builds up the conscience."† That a thousand difficulties and objections, a thousand sources of bitter disgust and alienation are removed by confession, is a fact well known to the physicians of souls, who have experience of the maladies of the human intelligence. It is sin which raises all these clouds. Men have wondered at the sacred history which records that man fell for an apple. Blind and thoughtless: they read the same record, however humiliating, in their own hearts. Such is still the degradation of this marvellous piece of workmanship—man! He falls daily for an apple, even so, for a little sugar, for a little sugar and blood. Attend to the order and progress of human perdition; it is the Master of the Sentences who speaks: "First God said, 'in the day that you shall eat of it, you shall die the death.' Then the woman said, 'lest perchance we die.' Lastly, the serpent said, 'ye shall not die.' God affirmed; the woman doubted; the devil denied; finally, the man, in compliance with Eve, consented. Now in each man continually the order and progress of temptation is the same as in the case of our first parents, and similar is the result when reason, which ought to command with authority, consents to the suggestions of passions which ought to obey, and decrees that to be done which they advise; for then the man is expelled from all happy life, from the paradise of his mind, as if from that terrestrial garden in which he was first placed by his Maker."‡ But, you will say, once instructed, what need of having these

personal admonitions repeated, as the practice of frequent confession implies? For answer to this question, hear what St. Anselm says. "The devil is like a deceitful pleader, who gives false witness in court, and when rejected, returns again, after a time, with the same, pretending to have been injured, till the judge declares what was once well determined cannot be revived again. Thus the devil pleads in the heart of man, to which place he comes as to a court, and there asserts that to be true which he knows to be false, and false that which is true; for there he affirms it as a truth that a man ought to love the world, to seek riches and honour, to fulfil the desires of the flesh, all which is false. And on the other hand, he affirms it to be false that a man should leave the world and despise riches and honours, and mortify the flesh, and redeem his sins with alms, all which is proved to be true. And when any one who knows how to judge between what is right and what is wrong, hears the devil in his heart say this, he determines that what he calls just is unjust, and the converse. And then the devil departs, but afterwards he hopes that the man will have forgotten his own decree, and he returns and revives the cause, as if it had not been rightly judged."* How necessary, then, to have a counsellor and faithful fellow combatant ever at one's side, to confirm the soul in rejecting the deceitful things that may be now floating before the fatigued intelligence, and to remind it that what was once well determined ought never to be again revived. Above all, for youth in the season of so many mental and bodily passions, as Socrates says, *ὅταν δὴ περὶ αὐτὸν βομβοῦσαι καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι ἐπιθυμίαι*,† by means of what remembrance of mere general instruction can it resist? How indispensable is the teacher's high discourse, and the friendly admonitions of the sweet and holy friend, the physician of secret wounds, as St. John Climachus is styled—*vir sanctus occultorum vulnerum medicus*? for

— "of such skill appliance needs
To medicine the wound that healeth last."‡

Even in a mere political point of view, who can estimate the benefits that resulted

* St. August. in Ps. 103.

† Hugo S. Victor, de Anima, Lib. III. cap. 10.

‡ Pet. Lomb. Lib. II. distinct. 24.

* S. Anselmi di Similitudinibus, cap. 76.

† De Repub. Lib. IX.

‡ Dante, Purg. XXV.

to society from the influence of spiritual directors upon kings and men in civil authority? Take but one instance. When the duchess of Milan, on the death of her husband, and in the absence of her son, Galeazzo, neglected the counsels of her confessor, who was a minor friar, his superiors removed him, saying that it was in vain to send a physician to one who refused to follow his prescriptions. The duchess used every effort to have him restored, and when the vicar-general came to Milan, she prevailed on him to arrange the affair with the fathers, and in consequence a decree was issued in 1467, signed by the superiors of the province of Milan, and by the vicars of Bologna and Naples, granting to the said duchess brother Bonaventura de Pantanidis for her confessor, but on these conditions, that she should not suspend the execution of justice in civil causes, that she should diminish the superfluous expenses of her government, that she should satisfy her creditors yearly or daily, according to her ability, and that she should not oppose any obstacle to the succession of benefices.*

As yet we have seen but the need of prevention and of guidance to which this divine institution corresponds. It remains to view the cure and recovery.

Although the human soul is immortal, it has nevertheless," says St. Augustin, "a kind of death belonging to it. The death of the whole man, indeed, the second death, does not take place till the soul, deserted by God, deserts the body, but the death of the soul takes place when God deserts it, as that of the body follows when deserted by the soul."†

At Florence in the days of the Medicis, the abbot Lumbo employed his skill in an admirable art, to represent the progressive stages of decomposition in the bodies of those who died of the pestilence. One turns pale if the eye catches but a momentary glance at that dreadful spectacle; but who could pourtray the different stages of corruption in the soul's death, or could survive a glance at it? Dante says of Satan,—

"If he were beautiful
As he is hideous now, and yet did dare
To scowl upon his Maker, well from him
May all our mis'ry flow!"‡

Profound words, that can teach us what

* Ann. Minorum, vol. XIII.

† S. August. de Civitate Dei, Lib. XIII. c. 2.

‡ XXXIV.

effect might follow. I find this idea struck Marsilius Ficinus, for in his letter to Julian the physician, he says that "if it were possible to behold the effigy of a wicked mind, one would fly from it with more speed and horror than from the sight of bodies that the plague had dispossessed of life."* It is sufficient with the school to recognise the threefold character of moral death in relation to the three persons of the blessed Trinity, to know that he who falls through infirmity, as Richard of St. Victor says, "is greatly contrary to Him who is the highest power, the Father; that he who sins through ignorance is opposed to him who is the highest wisdom, the Son; and that he who offends through sheer malice is the especial adversary of Him who is the highest goodness, the Holy Ghost."† "Penance and that rite which first makes man Christian are styled the sacraments of the dead, because they transfer men from this state of death, to one of spiritual life. The mother of Naïm, who was a widow, was overjoyed at her young son being raised to life again; and for men spiritually resuscitated, mother church rejoices daily."‡ This testimony of St. Augustin might be illustrated from the moralists and even historians of the middle ages, who attest the continued action of divine grace in the same mystery of resuscitating those that were dead in trespasses and sins. Hereafter we shall be able to remain for some space with these convertites. At present it will be sufficient to cast a glance upon some and pass on. St. Bernard received so much joy at the conversion of the knight Arnulphus, that he said publicly that Jesus Christ was no less admirable in the conversion of brother Arnulphus than in the resurrection of Lazarus, considering what bonds of vice and difficulties of the world he had to break through in order to embrace a holy life. The sentiments of men in the middle ages respecting conversion to justice are very profound. Of the difficulty attending it they seem impressed with a deeper sense than later moralists. "The heart," says St. Gregory, "must be moved from its place: the place of the human heart is the love of the world, but when touched by divine aspiration, its place becomes the love of eternity. By consideration of its eternal country, the soul is as it were moved from its

* Epist. III.

† Richardi S. Vict. de Eruditione Interioris Hominis, L. II. c. 3. ‡ S. August. Hom. 44.

place."* On the other hand they found that this supernatural change was often wrought by means of circumstances that appeared to mortal eye trifling and ignoble. "Vidi semen in terram de agricolæ manu negligenter lapsum, fructum lætissimum ac plurimum tulisse." This is what St. John Clinachus says, alluding to men who were converted by means of some apparently fortuitous event or unworthy motive. Salvation is of God, and he imparts it in diverse modes. "Vocat undique ad pœnitentiam, vocat beneficiis creaturæ, vocat impertiendo tempus vivendi, vocat per lectorem, vocat per tractatorem, vocat per intimam cogitationem, vocat per flagellum correptionis, vocat per misericordiam consolationis."† Bernardine Gomesius, the Spanish historian, describing the tempest which befel the fleet of king James the First of Arragon, on the expedition against the Moors of Majorca, remarks, that "there is nothing more desirable than a storm at sea; for it does good," he says, "to souls, producing holy and salutary fruit of true and lively contrition, and that broken and contrite spirit which God doth never despise."‡ A certain judge entered the order of St. Francis from hearing a light jest of one who said to a swine-herd that had great difficulty to make his swine enter a stable, "tell them to enter as judges and attorneys enter hell, and you will see how they will pass in quickly." The blessed Torello de Castro Puppio, in Tuscany, when a licentious youth, was suddenly converted by means of a cock alighting from a window upon his shoulder and crowing thrice.§ And what think you were the fruits of these conversions?

"When man," says St. Hildegard, "returns to his Creator like the prodigal son, he renounces the dæmon and chooses his Lord. Then all the vices of the dæmon are confounded, and all celestial harmonies are admired."|| It pleases the moderns to entertain doubts as to the possibility of having an exact knowledge of such transformations, though even the testimony of the Gentile philosophers is against them. "For my part," says Plutarch, "I think that a man who should have been transformed by the gods into a woman like Cæneus, would be more ignorant of this metamor-

phose, than another on being rendered temperate and brave, being transported from a bestial to a heavenly and divine life, would be ignorant of the moment when this change was effected."

During the middle ages it would seem as if the hearts of men were ever bent upon being employed as instruments to accomplish changes of this kind, and as if they continually meditated upon that sentence of Richard of St. Victor, "*Timenda est hæc nox, in qua homo quotidie fit deterior et tamen de se securior.*"* Again and again are they warning friends and enemies against deferring such a work. Sometimes by terrible admonitions, saying, *Cras, cras, cras, to-morrow we shall amend, and answering, All our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death; at others by tales horribly gay, which represent the subtlety of the victim practising with his own conscience, and with his guide, interpreting his promise to begin to-morrow, as always intended for a future day, till at length he is overtaken, and perishes in the moment when he is least aware. Their admonitions are always like those of Socrates to Ischomachus in Xenophon. "It is good to begin to follow virtue from this very day, when we hear for the first time what it really is."In hac mortalitate, te adjuvante, peccata sua defleant,*" implying that without divine aid he cannot so much as lament his sins with the tears of the elect. Nor are there wanting recitals full of terror to awaken the obdurate by revealing deep mysteries of Almighty grace. And of these I shall present one example, as it contains incidental evidence of the assiduity of the rustic population, during the middle ages, to attend to their soul's health. "In the year 1464, a thing happened worthy of being known to posterity," says the historian of Croyland, "There was a man in the town of Croyland, named John Wayle, a day labourer. He committed some enormous crime which was known only to himself. When the holy season arrived in which the faithful people prepare to celebrate the Paschal feast by purifying themselves in the laver of pious confession, he went to the church along with the others through shame and not from a

* S. Greg. Moral. in Job XXVII.

† S. August. in Ps. 102.

‡ Bernardini Gomesii de Vita Jacobi I. Arragon. Lib. VI.

§ Wadding, Annal. Minorum, tom. IV. V.

|| Epist. ad Eberhard.

* Richardi S. Vict. in Cantic. Canticor. c. 11.

† Xen. Œconom. cap. 11.

desire of confession. There admitted to the tribunal he concealed this deadly wound and went away uncleansed, and on the day of our Lord's resurrection, O grief! he dared to receive the sacrament of reconciliation to the destruction of his own soul. Returning home he felt remorse, which increased during three days, till at length he was seized with horrible madness, as if possessed by dæmons. So the neighbours bound him in irons. The monks hastened to his assistance, and proceeded to read the office to him, but every time that the words of hope and salvation were pronounced, he fell into convulsions and uttered cries of despair. At length he was carried bound into the church, and a watch was set over him. Every one poured out prayers for him, and there was always some one or other of the monks who spoke consoling words to him, and promised a remedy for his mind, but he would make no answer, only through incessant clamour he was become hoarse and unable to speak much. At length he was observed to grow more gentle, and to make the sign of the cross. Examples of penitence were read to him, and he was exhorted to confession by every argument. There was one of the brethren who peculiarly devoted himself to save his soul, consoling him with secret counsels and private exhortations, and declaring to him that there was no crime so horrible in life but that it might be washed away by contrition and confession. Moreover, to win him he told him that if he would consent, he would willingly give his own soul a pledge for his. With such words the man was moved, and lo, signing himself, he declared that he was ready to confess. Unbound he was then led to the confessional, where at first he could only pour forth groans, but at length after repeated attempts, that brother still urging him, and going to him alone, by divine grace the string of his tongue was loosed, and he made his confession. Such was his joy and gratitude, that for seven days after he never left the church, but continued giving thanks to God. He changed his habitation to another place, but every succeeding year as long as he lived he used to visit Croyland, to give glory to God, and to thank blessed Mary and St. Guthlac.*

St. Bernard, in a letter to the abbot Suger, called upon him by every motive of religion and duty, to exert his influence with the Senechal Stephen de Garlande,

who was reputed to be his friend. "Give him then," says he, "proofs of a solid friendship; labour for his conversion, and become by these means the friend of truth."* The admonitory letter which Peter, the venerable abbot of Cluni, sent to the Lord Stephen de Castello, telling him that it was high time to think about saving his soul, is another noble example of this charitable solicitude for the increase of justice.† The blessed Manasses, bishop of Troyes, in the year 983, was not content with labouring for the sanctification of his flock and of his clergy to the neglect of his own family, who were powerful in the world. He had a brother Hilduin, count of Arcyes sur Aulbe, who led a military, carnal, voluptuous, and desperate life, which greatly afflicted the bishop. Hearing that the abbot Adson had a certain ascendancy over his soul, for he feared and respected him, he deputed him to associate as much as possible with this debauched soldier. Adson, who was never slow to labour for souls, was enabled by the divine grace to convert him, so that the insolent soldier and vicious libertine became a thorough penitent and a true gentleman. What a miracle was this! That a choleric count, murderous and cruel, should be changed into a mild, humane, peaceable gentleman, who undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to suffer for Jesus Christ.‡ This zeal for conversions to justice was not confined to the clergy. We find it inspiring even poets. Laurent Desmoulins says that he wrote his book entitled the *Catholicon des Mal Advisez*—

"A celle fin que on advise à bien vivre
Et amender sa vie désormais
Sans offenser le Créateur jamais."

"There are some," says Guibert de Nogent, "who live well and contently, but who, because they have not a pastoral place in the church, think that they do not owe to their brethren a word of holy preaching, which is very absurd; for if by a dumb animal, that is, by an ass, according to blessed Peter, God wished to reprove the folly of the prophet, how much more and beyond all comparison worthy of teaching and of giving discipline to co-equals is the human nature."§ It is in reference to these wondrous examples of conversion that the church makes use of that remarkable

* S. Bernardi Epist. LXXVIII.

† S. Pet. Ven. Abb. Epist. Lib. V. 3.

‡ Desguerrois Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 244.

§ Guiberti Abb. de Novigento Moralium Genesios Præmium.

* Hist. Croylandensis Continuat. p. 539. in Rer. Anglic. Script. tom. I.

expression, "O God, the restorer and lover of innocence."* For among the benefits of penance was reckoned the fulfilment of the divine promise that the years which the locust and caterpillar, and the rust had eaten, should be restored; words interpreted by St. Jerome as implying the restitution of spiritual goods which had been consumed by mortal sin: and St. Anselm says that "when the sins of one who has been absolved are made manifest to an assembled universe, they may give him no more pain than the remembrance of a wound on the body which had been long healed."† But let us proceed now to the institution itself through which such grace is communicated to human souls.

As God the Father laid aside his right of judging, and gave to his Son all power to judge in sending him into the world, so the Son, on leaving the world, transmitted to his apostles and to their successors his sovereign authority to condemn or absolve the world.‡ "Consider, brethren," says Hugo of St. Victor, "the merciful dispensation of God. He alone can take away sins and justify sinners, and yet, that he might give security to the human conscience, he hath granted the power of loosing sins, and the power of indulgence to man, in order that man might approach with more familiarity and confidence to man as to his like, whom also he can behold when about to ask and receive pardon. For God can see man praying, but man could not see God indulging. Therefore God hath willed that man should speak to man and treat of his salvation with him, and should seek pardon and receive indulgence from him who is but the minister of Him to whom all authority is given in heaven and on earth."§

"Show me bitter tears," says S. Gregory of Nyssa, "that I may mingle mine with yours. Impart your trouble to the priest as to your Father; he will be touched with a sense of your misery. Show to him what is concealed without blushing; open the secrets of your soul as if you were showing to a physician a hidden disorder; he will take care of your honour and of your cure."|| And Origen says, "if we discover our sins not only to God but to those who may thus apply a remedy to our wounds and iniquities, our sins will be effaced by

him who said, 'I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist.'** How do such passages recall the marvellous secrets of Almighty providence, and of heaven's mercy attested in the chronicles of the ages of faith, and known to so many at all times from the personal experience of a troubled life! How do they recall that transference and constitution of kingdoms, when God having overthrown the tyranny of vices, makes virtues reign in the soul of man!† "They who fly from Sodom have the angel of God for guide," says S. John Climachus, alluding to the flight from sin by the sacraments of the church.‡ "Mark those penitents who kneel down by confessionals at the feet of some meek venerable father who stoops down to hear the whispered lamentation, to beat away the busy meddling fiend that lays strong siege unto the wretch's soul, and from his bosom purge the black despair. O through what waters must their souls have passed before the sense of what is intolerable constrained them to take refuge here! A man came expressly one hundred leagues to confess to St. Francis de Sales at Paris, and another made a voyage of two thousand leagues by sea to confess to St. Francis Xavier. "Who will place me," such is their cry, "according to the month of my former days in which God kept me, when his light illumined my heart! Ah, where is that purity of prayer? that certain confidence? Where are those sweet tears in bitterness? Where are they? Where that hope of holy rest? They are perished, and as if they had never been!"

The voice of God walking in Paradise is interpreted by Guibert de Nogent as signifying the reproof or memory of past justice no longer preserved. The Lord calls Adam and saith, Adam, where art thou? He calls him when he wishes to lead him to penance after having committed sins—Where art thou! Mark the place to which thou hast fallen, which is no other than pride, thou who hadst formerly learned to stand humble.§ "Quis mihi tribuat, ut sim juxta menses pristinos, secundum dies quibus Deus custodiebat me: quando splendebat lucerna ejus super caput meum, et ad lumen ejus ambulabam in tenebris; sicut fui in diebus adolescentiæ meæ, quando secreto Deus erat in tabernaculo meo;

* Fourth feria, 2d week in Lent.

† S. Anselmi de Similitud. cap. 60.

‡ S. Joan. 20, 21.

§ Hugo de S. Vict. Eruditionis Theolog. ex Miscellan. Lib. I. tit. 49.

|| Serm. de Pœnit.

* Hom. 17. in Lucam.

† Richard. de S. Victor, de eruditione hominis interioris, Lib. I. l. 14.

‡ Scala Paradisi.

§ Moraliū Genesios, Lib. II. c. 3.

quando erat omnipotens mecum et in circuitu meo pueri mei; quando lavabam pedes meos butyro, et petra fundebat mihi rivos olei?"* He that once appeared as the angelic youth daily growing up in the favour of God and man, wanders now over the face of the earth, deposed, ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunned, a spectacle of ruin or of scorn to all the host of heaven! How shall I behold the face henceforth of God or angels, erst with joy and rapture so oft in purity of heart beheld? Such is the interior cry of erring man, when first the voice is heard which calls him from the truly dreadful grave of mortal sin. Ah, what foul winds have shaken sore his inward state of mind, calm region once, and full of peace, now lost and turbulent: for understanding hath not been suffered to rule, and the will hath not heard her lore; both have been in subjection to sensual appetite, who from beneath usurping over sovereign reason claimed superior sway. Child of grace, wafted towards better waves, the harbingers of untroubled and eternal peace, how did you feel your heart beat when you found yourself within the port of repentance, and how did hope revive when you beheld the senior at your side, holy and revered, with gestures such as spake a father's love; who marked the secret wish by diffidence restrained, and speaking, gave you confidence to speak. He is the true father, who can give preceptual medicine to rage, fetter strong madness in a silken thread, and charm agony with words. "Do you wait to be worthy before you rise up and go to your father?" It is an ascetic of the middle ages who speaks. "And when will that be? If only the good and worthy, and great and perfect ought to approach God, to whom can the publicans and sinners go? Yet the Gospel says, that they drew near to Jesus to hear him. Let the unworthy then approach in order that they may be made worthy, and let the evil come that they may be made good; let the little and imperfect come that they may be rendered great and perfect; let all and each come that they may receive from the plenitude of the living fountain, for he is the fountain of life which is inexhaustible."†

"Penitence," says St. John Climachus, "is the daughter of hope, the renouncement of infidelity and despair."‡ "Penitence," says Clemens Alexandrinus, "is

tardy knowledge. The first knowledge is innocence. *Ἐπαθεία γὰρ γνώσις μετάνοια, γνώσις δὲ ἡ πώρην ἀναμαρτυρία.*"* "Penitence," says the church, "is the last plank after shipwreck." Richard of St. Victor, attests the experience of the church, saying, "often the human mind after a multiplied ruin, being moved by divine inspiration, returns to justice, and being taught and humbled by its fall, rises again the more vigorous inasmuch as it is more instructed and more humbled."† While those that have greatly fallen find salvation here, the just who falls seven times each day gains strength and facility in his progress to perfection. Slight, indeed, may have been his fall; still he relates it somewhat with that colour tinged which oft times pardon for heavier injuries meriteth for man. The poet who had often heard the traditions of the ages of faith, says, "That our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not." In fact, how many virtues on the part of man, how many graces on the part of the divine Mediator, how many attributes of the Divinity would be unknown, if sin had not been, penance, repentance, contrition, satisfaction, sacraments, reconciliation! These were the operations which formed the Catholic character, which destroyed in the soul all hypocrisy and formal virtue, teaching every child of the church to cry with king Richard in the moments of his triumph, "Cover your heads, and mock not flesh and blood with solemn reverence!" The habit of confession humbled the interior man, and repressed insolence of exterior, sweetened conversation and enlarged the mind; so that if it were possible to submit the temper of the adversaries of the holy discipline to such a process, we may be assured that it could not long resist its action. Independent even of the supernatural influence, the hearts of many were doubtless inflamed by those previous and subsequent prayers known to the faithful, which were pronounced over the initiated; mystic expressions orally transmitted from the ancient church, beyond all doubt the most impressive and sublime that were ever heard issuing from mortal lips. Times, indeed, there were, when canonic skill imposed delay, when there were doubts which required the postponement of this act of supreme grace; but then mark, reader, with what care the sinking wretch was prevented from falling back to the gulf of the

* Job xxix.

† Thom. à Kempis, Soliloquium.

‡ Scala Paradisi, Grad. V.

* Stromat. Lib. II. c. 6.

† De Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. I. cap. 1.

reprobate. The penitent against whom the doors of reconciliation were for a season closed, went away inflamed rather than discouraged, already replete with consolation. His testimony might be that of Adam in reply to the angel who gave hope of mercy even when announcing his sentence of banishment from Paradise.

"Gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow and dejection and disgrace
Our frailty can sustain, doubt not
Shall be borne with grateful resignation,
In a spirit of contrition and atoning woe."

There is no important effect even of secular good which the guides of the middle ages do not ascribe to a sincere and humble faith in the sacrament of penance. Guibert de Nogent relates, that in his time there was a young woman on the borders of Cambrai who, after becoming the unhappy victim of a seducer, was speedily moved to true contrition, so that she made humble confession of her sin. That night being about to travel to another country, she was overtaken by the same traitor and induced to approach the side of a well into which he threw her; and after a time, finding by her reply that she was not dead, he made a shower of stones descend upon her, and then went away, believing that the crime was consummated. After forty days some swine-herds in the fields passing near that well, heard a hollow groan from beneath, which led to the discovery of her being at the bottom. Hastening to the town and returning with ropes, they succeeded, in the presence of a multitude, in drawing her up and restoring her to life. The fame of which miracle was spread to distant lands. "Lo," cries Guibert, "what avails perseverance in the resolution of amendment. She had faith in patience, and after the grace of confession never doubted God's mercy and the efficacy of his sacrament. She had that faith which in all the ancient patriarchs is commemorated with such repetition by the apostle."* But I should never finish were I to repeat the remarkable events, and the beautiful profound reflections contained in the books of the middle ages respecting the virtue and excellence of that sacerdotal absolution which, as Richard of St. Victor says, "frees a true penitent studious of satisfying for his sin, not only from the dreadful flames of eternal

punishment, but also from the burning fire of purgatory."* Never, therefore, in days of yore did envious pride find utterance, when men overheard a brother addressing the priest of holy church in words like those of Spenser :

"What service may I doe unto thee meete
Thou hast from darkeness me return'd to light,
And with thy heavenly salves and med'cines
Hast drest my sinful wounds? I kisse thy
blessed feete."†

If these things were not conformable to the ideal in the minds of certain philosophers of a perfect and immutable state, it was well remembered that they were avowedly intended for a condition of existence that was recognised as imperfect and mutable. Man alone, a wayfarer, that is, while on earth, was known to be the subject of the sacraments which are the instruments by which all true justice either begins, or is increased when begun, or is restored when lost.‡ As St. Augustin says, "the temporal sacraments are the medicinal ligatures of our contrition. All the things whatsoever that we say to you, whatever is acted temporally in the Church, are ligatures of the contrite. In the state of Jerusalem they will be removed as the surgeon unbinds the patient who is restored to health. There we shall not receive what we receive here. The Gospel will not be recited that our faith may remain, and no hands of a superior will be imposed upon us. All these things are ligatures of a fracture which will be taken off when we come to perfect soundness."§

Hitherto we have avoided controversy. As the swimmer first creeps along the high bank of the ancient Campus Martius, caressing each flower as he passes, before he commits himself to the impetuous and turbid flood of the Tiber, which he knows will carry him away so far when once he commits himself to it,—so have I lingered on these confines, loth to plunge into a frigid and obscure debate amidst ruins and a wreck of opinions which present nothing tangible or defined, or trustworthy. The Athenian ambassadors said in the assembly of Lacedæmon, that "with all men it was a blameless thing, and the object of no envious displeasure, to establish well the measure most useful against the greatest

* De potestate ligandi et solvendi, c. 23.

† Spenser, III. 5.

‡ De la Hogue de Sacramentis in Genere, cap. 6.

§ Tract. in Ps. 146.

|| Thucyd. I. 75.

* Guibert de Novigento de Pign. Sanctorum, Lib. II. cap. 2.

dangers."* But the adversaries of the church have formed an exception when they have condemned the salutary and divine institution of the sacramental confession, one of the subjects which they deem eminently calculated to further their efforts to alienate the minds of the ignorant from that state in which alone they can be happy; thus continuing to verify the saying of wise men in ancient times, that "while the cure of the body is regarded as worthy of immortal honours, the medicine of the soul is by many persons disdained, and by more viewed with suspicion and envy."† In general one may note in the *μυσοκαθηλικοί*, as in all that kind of people who seek a praise by disparaging others, that they do prodigally spend a great many wandering words in scoffs and taunts, carping at each thing which by stirring the spleen, may stay the brain from a thorough beholding the worthiness of the subject. These kind of objections, as they are full of a very idle easiness, (since there is nothing of so sacred a majesty, but that an itching tongue may rub itself upon it,) so, as an ancient writer says, deserve they no other answer, but instead of laughing at the jest, to laugh at the jester. Indeed, these pleasant fault-finders, who will correct the verb before they understand the noun, and confute others' knowledge before they confirm their own, should be reminded at least, that scoffing cometh not of wisdom. Here one may remark in passing, how vain must have been the attempt of those who were separated from the church to understand what passed within it, always arguing a *posse ad esse*. Even in common life strangers can never tell what passes within a house until they have been admitted regularly as members of the family. The wayfarer, if disposed to judge, needs an admonition like that of the hermit in Tasso, who, knowing that the crusaders were misled by a false report respecting Bertoldo's heir—

"Sir knight, (quoth he) if you intend to ride
And follow each report fond people say,
You follow but a rash and trothless guide,
That leads vain men amiss, and makes them
stray."‡

Now the Church had far more mysterious relations than could exist in any mere domestic society, so that by persons who viewed it from without, a right understanding respecting it could only be formed by

an act, in the first instance, of confidence in the truth of God who has founded the church. They must at first have been satisfied with the evidence that it was a divinely constituted household, and then after being received into it as members, they would assuredly in due time have discovered how it was holy in all its doctrines, and just in all its ways. As the Athenian says to the blind wanderer who interrogates him respecting the laurel groves to which he has come—"These things, O stranger, are to be venerated, not from the words of men, but rather from long custom and experience."* Cicero, indeed, says, that "the medicine of the soul is not only not desired before discovered, but that it is not even valued after it is known;" but such a complaint applies only to philosophy, for it was ungrounded in relation to the remedies which the church administers, insomuch that a man accustomed to confession, when asked for arguments to prove its divine origin as an integral part of religion, must have felt as if he had been called upon to prove the reality of his own existence. Its proofs were in the deepest roots of his spiritual life. His own amendment, the recovery of long lost joy, the renovation of his heart, this was the evidence that must have convinced him so feelingly that each argument beside would seem blunt and forceless in comparison. It is dangerous to follow men into the deepest recesses of their heart and behold what passes there: I will not, therefore, invite the moderns to search into the grounds of their hatred for confession. To persons obstinate in the conclusions of prejudice, reader, would I turn not, when viewing historically the supernatural features in the morality of the Catholic church. On confession and indulgence I will speak not as if to an ignorant multitude, nor to judges, nor to senators, more accustomed to action than to the contemplation of things, but as to a man interiorly philosophic who understands and loves philosophy.

Respecting the hatred of truth and the love of deceiving and of being deceived observable in many men, Paschal says, "Mark a proof of this which fills me with horror. The Catholic religion does not oblige one to discover his sins indifferently to all the world; it permits him to remain concealed from all other men excepting one only, to whom it commands him to disclose the bottom of his heart, and to show himself such as he really is. There is only

* Thucyd. I. 75. † Cicero, Tusc. III.
‡ Jerus. Deliv. Lib. XIV. 30.

* Œdip. Col. 62.

this one man in the world that it orders us to undeceive, and he is obliged to an inviolable secrecy, so that this knowledge is in him as if it was not in him. Can one imagine any thing more charitable and more gentle? Nevertheless, the corruption of man is such that he finds this a hard law, and it is one of the principal reasons which have made a great part of Europe revolt against the church.* You have heard the great thinker of modern times; let us now attend to the philosophy of the middle ages. "Silence respecting sin," says the Master of the Sentences, "arises from pride of heart. For a man wishes not to confess his sin in order that he may not be reputed externally such as he exhibits himself in the sight of God, which desire springs from the fountain of pride. For it is pride in a sinner to wish to be esteemed just, and it is hypocrisy to palliate or deny our sin like our first parents, or like Cain to bury it in silence. Now where there is pride and hypocrisy there can be no humility, and without humility there is no forgiveness. Therefore, where there is silence respecting sin there can be no hope of pardon. Here then," he continues, "we see how detestable is the silence of sin, and how necessary is confession, which is the evidence of a conscience fearing God; for he who fears the judgment of God does not blush to confess. Perfect fear dissolves all shame. The confession of sin has shame, and that shame is a heavy punishment: and for this reason we are commanded to confess, that we may suffer shame, for this is part of the divine judgment."† Thus the words of St. John, beginning with "if we confess our sins,"‡ were not understood as implying merely, "If we say that we are sinners generally with all the world," but as teaching the necessity of suffering the shame and humiliation of confessing one's personal particular sins; nor was there found any one formerly to maintain that this could be an immoral shame which would injure rather than repair the soul's purity. That extreme horror on finding that one has been suspected of crime, which Tieck's hero evinces in his conversation with Balthasar, only proved in fact an unilluminated heart: moreover, this overstrained and false honour reveals its own weakness, for by its

very indignation it evinces its conviction that the fall was possible. It is worthy of remark, that while the church inflicted penance on all who ever made mention of expiated sins,—for among the penitential canons of the rule of St. Columban, we read, "He who relates a sin already expiated shall fast on bread and water for a day,"*—the very men who denounced the act of humility that she imposed as injurious, made no scruple not only as we before observed, in resting in self-contemplation, but also in confessing the sins of their past life; or rather exulted in being able to recall the remembrance of them, disclosing them in detail with effrontery: their own retrospective narration differing from the confession which they renounced and stigmatised, only in the circumstance that theirs was made in defiance of the law of God, in hardened impenitence insensible to shame.

"O fearful thought!" cries S. John Climachus, "there are moments of delirium in the career of sin, when man fears not God, esteems as nothing the memory of eternal punishment, execrates prayer, looks at the relics of the dead as if they were senseless stones."† True, indeed; but what is it to reflect that in consequence of a new instruction, widely imparted and legally established in some places, this is the case with men now, not during moments of delirium, for which they might repent and make amends, but throughout their whole lives, which pass in an uninterrupted career of self-esteem and congratulation? To the fundamental objection of the moderns, the best mode of reply would be simply to relate in the clear and precise language of the middle ages, what was the Catholic doctrine. Taking, then, Hugo of St. Victor for their representative, let us hear what he says respecting sacerdotal absolution. "Solus Deus peccata dimittit; yet authorities have that power by which priests forgive sins, and that by which God forgives them. But priests are said to forgive sins, because they administer the sacraments in which, and by which, sins are by the divine authority, forgiven."‡ When it was said that the form of absolution which had been in use thirty years before was deprecatory, and that William of Auxerre, William of Paris, and cardinal Hugo thought that this was the

* *Pensees*, I. Partie, Art. V.

† *Lib. IV. Distinct. 18, 19.*

‡ *1 Joan. I. 9.*

* *Biblioth. M. Patrum*, Tom. XII. 2.

† *Grad. XV.*

‡ *Hugo de S. Vict. de Ecclesiasticis Officiis*, *Lib. I. cap. 25.*

only ancient form, S. Thomas Aquinas replied, that "he did not know whether this were true or not; but in any case no authority of antiquity could do prejudice to the words of our Lord, 'Whatever you shall bind on earth.'" Thus instead of being tempted to enter with them upon subtle, antiquarian investigations, he embraced the spirit of antiquity. It is clear, however, from the Roman council under pope Zacharia, that the form of the sacrament of confession was then similar to what it is at present.* Strictly judicial is the sacerdotal office, so that with accurate precision has the church retained the name of Basilica, which signified that upper part of the forum, where justice was administered to the people.†

The world, which instigates men to acts of injustice, is apt to suggest afterwards that the assurance of divine forgiveness is ungrounded and prejudicial. The modern philosopher holds language in regard to him who has been loosed by sacerdotal absolution, which might remind one of the fearful strife which Buonconte describes to Dante.

"Me God's angel took,
Whilst he of hell exclaim'd: 'O thou from heav'n!
Say, wherefore hast thou robb'd me? Thou of him
Th' eternal portion bear'st with thee away
For one poor tear.'"‡

But the wisdom of the ages of faith does not yield to such a cry as this. And in fact, there was no error which struck more at the root of Catholic manners, than the despair which led to it. Every man who hath rebellious proved to the law of heaven's justice, might say, like Exton, after murdering Richard the Second,

"For now the devil that told me I did well,
Says, that this deed is chronicled in hell."

Such accusation is heard in the hearts of all who are conscious of guilt, without knowing how to escape from it. In this mental torment steeped, there is what Novalis remarks, in the greatest physical pain, a paralysis of susceptibility, than which no disposition is more easily embraced. Man then stands as a destructive power. Alone, unconnected with the rest of the world, he feels himself almighty, and has for principle the hatred of men and of God.§ Weary

at length of sitting like the sullen Achilles, *ἰσάριον ἄχθος ἀποιῆς*,* a state equally obnoxious both to nature and grace,—bent on destruction, and yet undetermined what object to select, stung with sudden wrath, he turns his fury inward on himself, and joins the wretched band, whom, now more than ever numerous are found; for without descending to the regions of the dead, we can daily behold what Dante witnesseth, that

"The damned to o'erpass the river are not loath;
For so heaven's justice goads them on, that fear
Is turned into desire."†

Thus he makes that dismal choice to which the heathens devoted their enemies, as in the Virgilian line,

"Di meliora piis, erroremque hostibus illum."‡

How many men in our age resemble that eternal wanderer whose sorrows have been described in the legendary songs of every people, and whom a modern author has found so apt a subject for the wild poesy in which his genius takes delight. Ah! could the internal language of conscience, maintaining a continued conversation with these wretched victims, be heard by others, how often would be repeated the fearful dialogue between Ahasuerus and the fabled angel. "I feel a poison on my lips which I drink at every breath. Will it be as bitter to-morrow? More bitter to-morrow than yesterday, in the evening than the morning; more bitter at the bottom of thy flask than at the brim; more bitter in thy lodging than on thy journey, on thy journey than on thy departure; more bitter in the star than in the tempest; more bitter than in the star and the tempest, on the lips and in the eyes of thy host. Where goest thou? To my house. Thy gate is shut, thou shalt never pass it more. I have not yet taken my sandals, nor my belt, nor my cloak. Thou hast no need of them. Thou shalt have for coat of mail thy tissue of sorrows, and for cloak, the wind, the snow, and the rain of an eternal cloud. I know not the road. Thou shalt follow the track of the cranes across the sky; thou shalt walk on thorns. The gates of the city shall say to thee, farther; and ther iver, by the banks of which thou wouldst sit down, shall say farther, farther, to the sea, and the sea shall say to thee, farther, farther. Art thou not the eternal wanderer who shall

* Mabil. Prefat. in III. Sæcul. Benedict, § 6.
† M. Ant. Surgentis Neapolis illustrata, c. VI.
‡ Purg. V. § Schriften. II. 299.

• IL XVIII. 104.
‡ Georgic. III. 513.

† Hell, III.

have neither sleep nor rest, who shall never see the temple of his vow till the dead shall show thee the way to the last judgment in the valley of Josaphat?" These writers fable not. This echo, this voice of the mountain, this tradition of the sentence of Golgotha, depart, depart, farther on, farther on, pursues every soul of man that doeth evil; vainly does the sinner seek to shake from his head this black crown of cares. He turns to every man but to him by whom he could be delivered, and asks,

"Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Rase out the written troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?"

He can describe the evil well, though he disdains to apply to Him who could remove it; disdains, I say, for remark here that it was not with the medicinal lore of the church, as with the remedies of subtle investigators of nature, the secret of which was limited to a few. For the soul's health, the most obscure and ignorant knew or might have known where to apply in time of need, as the chamois-hunter in Manfred, where he says to that dark wanderer,

"Man of strange words, and some half-maddening
sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort
yet—
The aid of holy men—"*

Do you ask where are they found? Enter any of our churches, and there you will find them, like their divine Master on the mountain, seated waiting for you. Truly the view of a confessional, which excites the derision of the modern sophists, is enough to bring before the mind's eye of the faithful, Christ and the beatitude of heaven. He taught them seated on the mountain, to show, as St. Bernardine of Sienna remarks, "the sublimity and peace of the divine wisdom. He sat as if waiting for men; waiting for them in their sickness and infirmities, for men are slow to believe the things that are Christ's, slow to understand what is useful, slow to perform what is necessary, slow to penitence when they leave the right way and pour out their souls in sin; but the benignity of God, the patience of God, the charity

of Christ waits for their repentance, seeking not vengeance but to show mercy. His ministers sit, therefore, to attract the hearers. Why can I not hear them speak standing? Methinks I hear you say, I do not like this attraction; I disdain this authority. True, when there is a discourse in your assemblies to secular men, the orator generally stands, as if inviting to battle. But here, when men are supposed to be religious and contemplative, or desirous of becoming so, the high commissioned teacher remains seated, as if inviting men to tranquillity and peace."*

Would you learn now how this remedy is administered to the contrite? Listen then to the confessor, who speaks to the penitent in the words of St. Augustin. "Perchance you will say I have been baptized in Christ, when all my past sins were forgiven. I am now become too vile, resuming my former ways, and in the eyes of God returning like a loathsome dog to his vomit. Whither shall I go from his spirit? Whither shall I fly from his face? Whither, brother, unless by penitence to the mercy of Him whose power thou didst scorn by sinning? For from him no one rightly flies, but to him, from his severity to his goodness—for whatever you may have done, whatever may have been your sin, you are still in life, from which God, if he had been altogether unwilling to save you, would have taken you off. Why, therefore, do you not know that the patience of God leadeth you to repentance? For he who by crying out did not prevail upon you not to withdraw from him, by sparing you, cries out persuading you to return."† "As there is no tree so thorny and gnarled that it cannot be made smooth by the skill of the artisan, so there is no sinner," said holy Giles the Franciscan, "so flagitious, that God cannot change his heart, and adorn him with the virtues of his grace."

According to St. Augustin, the sin against the Holy Ghost is that of him who despairing, mocking, or despising the preaching of grace by which sins are washed away, and of peace by which we are reconciled to God, refuses to do penance, resolves to remain hardened in their impious and deadly sweetness, and so perseveres to the end.‡ So, when certain unworthy monks of St. Denis turned

* S. Bernardini Senensis, Tom. III. Ser. IV.

† Serm. CCCLI.

‡ S. August. in Epist. I. ad Rom.

* Manfred, Act II.

upon Abaillard, who charitably endeavoured to convert them to a holier life, and reminded him of his own sin and the scandal he had occasioned, he closed their mouths by those beautiful words of St. Gregory, "*Peccare humanum est, permanere autem in peccatis diabolicum.*"*

By confession and absolution, say the moderns, it is easy for the greatest criminals to tranquillize their conscience, and conceive themselves good Catholics. True, if their penitence be sincere. But what then? Is the church a school of philosophers, boasting of impeccable justice? So far otherwise, that St. Augustin compares it to an asylum opened for the refuse of every state. "*Remission of sins,*" saith he, "*which collects citizens to the eternal country, has something to which by a shadow there was a certain similitude in that asylum of Romulus, in which impunity of every crime drew together that multitude by which the state was founded.*"† You mark what was his idea of the city of God on earth. "*The sacraments of the Catholic church were not for the just, but for sinners hungering and thirsting after justice. This was the grace which healed the infirm, not proudly boasting of a false beatitude, but rather humbly confessing a true misery.*"‡ The world's zeal for virtue and the church's love for justice, are personified and drawn to the life by Shakespeare in two lines, where, to the indignant and scornful question of Leonato to poor Hero,

"Dost thou look up?"

The Friar answers,

"Yea: wherefore should she not?"§

The whole spirit of the Catholic religion is in this reply, "*Wherefore should she not?*" "*Major est divina misericordia quam humana miseria.*"||

How soon appeared God's mercy upon Adam and Eve, even in the first judgment, reversing instant death, and clothing them naked! "*Further,*" says Louis of Blois, "*read the whole life of Christ. What else do you behold but constant mercy for all men? Gratuitously he cures the sick, feeds the hungry, assists those who are in danger, cleanses the lepers,*

*gives sight to the blind and strength to the lame, casts out devils, raises the dead, and absolves the penitent. Examine again his doctrine, and what else does it breathe but the immense mercy of God? For what else appears in the parable of the lost sheep, of the lost piece of money, of the sound to whom there is no need of a physician, of the servant whose whole debt is forgiven, of the lender who excuses both his debtors, of the publican and the pharisee, of the good Samaritan, of the kind steward, of the prodigal son? Does not the very word Gospel promise mercy? Does not the very name Jesus promise salvation to sinners?**" "*Who could have thought,*" says Pelisson, "*that the sinful woman would have obtained by her love and tenderness, the reward of virgins? That the robber punished for his crimes, should have found in his punishment the privilege of martyrs?† If the ten lepers, who were desired to go and show themselves to the priests, were healed as they went, how much more have the spiritually-defiled reason to expect that they will be cleansed by complying with the institution of Christ, in revealing their interior maladies to those ministers of his mercy who have especial authority from him to obliterate or to make indelible?"*

St. Augustin, speaking of the Scribes and Pharisees who brought to our Lord the woman taken in adultery, desires us to observe what was the admirable mildness of our Lord. They considered that he was too merciful, too gentle.‡ On the same day the church reads this Gospel and the history of Susanna accused by the elders and condemned to death. Here is the contrast of human judgment and that of Christ. The one pronounced death, the other these gracious words, "*Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.*" We condemn these Scribes and Pharisees, and yet they only fulfilled what the law imposed on them. They ought to have been the first to throw the first stone, and the people were to finish afterwards what they had begun. Behold what should confound those who accuse the church for receiving sinners? St. Augustin says that the Jews who had crucified our Lord afterwards fell into despair, but that they ought not to have despaired since Jesus had prayed for them on the cross, and had

* Moral. in Job.

† De Civitate Dei, Lib. V. 17. ‡ Id. X. 28.

§ Much Ado about Nothing, IV. 1.

|| Petr. Bless.

* Ludovic. Blosii Consolatio pusillan. I.

† Réponse aux objections, sect. V.

‡ Tractat. in 33 Joan.

pleaded in excuse their ignorance.* St. Bonaventura undoubtedly speaks the universal sentiment of men in the middle ages on this point, "for," saith he, "the mercy of our God is immense, and if there were in you alone all the sins that ever were committed, or could be committed by other men, his mercy would still exceed them infinitely, and he would pardon you all these things, if you returned to him trusting in the wounds of Christ, and in the clemency of his Mother, considering yourself a sinner, and humbly turning your mind to the fountain of pity."† "Millies excideras, toties vult spes uti resurgas," was the maxim of the monks of St. Gall in the tenth century. "Nullum peccatum criminale dum displicet," saith St. Augustin, "nullum veniale dum placet." As Durandus observes, the church in her offices reads from the writings of David, who was a homicide and an adulterer, from those of Matthew, who was a publican, from those of Paul, who was a cruel persecutor of Christ, and from those of St. Augustin, who was a Manichæan, holding forth a wondrous standard to rally the dispersed and to remove despair from sinners.‡ "Let no one distrust," says St. Ambrose; "let no one conscious of ancient sins despair of divine rewards. The Lord knows how to change his sentence, if you know how to amend your faults."§ In a word, say the doctors of the middle ages, "His mercy is as incomprehensible as his justice."

As in this world, the abuse of all good gifts follows as naturally as shadows do on light, it can little surprise us to find that the sacrament of penance should be sometimes perverted from its true intention and spirit, by weak and deluded men.

"There are some," says St. Ambrose, "who ask for penance that they may be at once restored to communion. These do not so much desire to be loosed as to bind the priest, for they do not unburden their own consciences, but they burden his."||

True, there is a horrible perversity which may possibly develop itself in the practice of repeated confession, to which a most affecting allusion is made by Guibert de Nogent, in the history of his own life, whose words, however, are sufficient to convince every thoughtful reader that it is a stain from which humanity in general is

exempt. Let us hear this innocent holy abbot testifying against himself. "I confess, O God, the cause of my infinite errors; I confess the sins of my boyhood, youth, and mature age. Often do I call to mind how I have repeatedly sinned against thee, and how, after each fall, thou didst grant me compunction, and how thou didst bear with me, with a patience beyond all that I can imagine, and such as I can never sufficiently admire. Has this now been an insolent piety, to go on thus sinning, and between sinning returning to thee? Thou knowest that I did not therefore sin because I felt thee to be merciful. I did not abuse thy mercy, when through the necessity of sinning I was compelled to sin. Truly, such an abuse would be too profane, if, because after sin, the return to thee was very easy, the excess of sinning should always have delighted me. I sin truly, but having received reason, it grieves me in the affection of my heart to have transgressed, whenever my mind has succumbed to the heavy temptation. Doubtless here is sufficient to fill me with humiliation and sorrow; but amidst these daily maladies, and as it were resurrections, what ought I to do? Whether is it not much more sane to struggle to approach thee for a time, or for a moment to take breath in thee, than to forget the remedy and to despair of grace; for what is to despair, unless to cast one's self with deliberation into every sink of flagitiousness."*

Thus the men of the eleventh century had felt and considered, and rejected as groundless, the objection which is now brought with such clamour against the faith and discipline of the church.

We are told also by some, that the penance of the Catholic church renders men satisfied with a mere formal profession, without a sincere return to God. But in this deep suspicion, reader, rest thou not. It is impossible for any one in the least imbued with the learning of the middle ages, to doubt whether the doctrine of the church on this point be obnoxious to such a charge. "True contrition," say theologians, "is one of the acts of the penitent, which are, as it were, the matter of this sacrament.† A repentance to which the three parts did not belong, was not permitted to tranquilize any conscience." "Penance," says St. Gregory, "is to weep for perpetrated evils,

* Tractat. 31 in Joan.

† Stimul. divin. amoris, Pars II. cap. 4.

‡ Durandi Rationale, Lib. VI. c. 1.

§ Lib. II. in Luc. c. 1.

|| De Pœnitent. Lib. II. c. 9.

* Guiberti Abb. de Novigento de Vita sua, Lib. I. cap. 1.

† Conc. Trident. Sess. 14. cap. 3.

and not to commit again what we weep for." Isidore says, "He is a mock penitent who continues to commit that for which he hath done penance."* Pope Pius the First, in his epistle to all the faithful says, "Nihil predest homini jejulare et orare et alia religionis opera agere, nisi mens ab iniquitate revocetur." And the Master of the Sentences, treating on the sacrament of penance, remarks that our Lord said, "Vade, et amplius noli peccare," and did not say, "Ne pecces," but harbour not even the wish to sin.† "The only remedy for sin," says St. Odo, the second abbot of Cluni, "is to refrain from committing it in future."‡

"True penance," says Richard of St. Victor, "is to grieve for the past prevarication, with a firm purpose of confessing, of satisfying, and of avoiding sin, in future. With this disposition penitents are worthily absolved by the priest; otherwise, they are sent away without absolution, that is, their sins are retained."§ Hugo St. Victor expresses it thus: "The resurrection of Lazarus designates the effective absolution of the priest; for it was not until our Lord had called him, and had restored him to life, saying, 'Lazarus, come forth!' and until he had come forth, that he was loosed by the disciples: from which consideration we may remark, that those only we should loose by pastoral authority whom we understand our Author hath restored to life by resuscitating grace."|| "True confession and true penance," saith he, in another place, "imply that a man so repents his having sinned, that he does not repeat the crime."¶ The monks of St. Gall, in the tenth century, conveyed the same lesson in verse,

"Optime plorantur, quas postea non geminantur."**

"All this is expressed in a terrific image by the great poet of the ages of faith, when Count Guido da Montefeltro, whom he meets in hell, though he is rash and unjust in placing him there, describes his being seized by the dark cherub, when he was numbered with the dead, who cried to Him that would have rescued him, "Wrong

me not; he is mine, and must below to join the wretched crew."

"No power can the impenitent absolve;
Nor to repent, and will, at once consist,
By contradiction absolute forbid.
Oh, misery! how I shook myself, when he
Seiz'd me, and cried, 'Thou haply thought'st
me not
A disputant in logic so exact.'"

A glance at *Manipulus Curatorum* of Guido de Monte Rocherius of Rheims in the thirteenth century, or one page of the books of Robert de Sorbon, entitled *De Conscientia* and *De Confessione*, would be sufficient to deter any one of ordinary courage from accusing the penitents and directors of those times of being deficient in spirituality.† Truly, the language of the ancient writers is more calculated to make men tremble for themselves, than to excite a spirit of criticism in regard to others.

If thou hast, reader, lent hitherto a willing ear to those who vilify and mock our holy faith, for holding fast the promise of our Lord, I will render thee more apt to cope with them, and let this evidence

"Henceforth be lead unto thy feet, to make
Thee slow in motion as a weary man,
Both to the 'yea' and 'nay' thou seest not."‡

St. Ambrose says that is far easier to preserve our innocence, than truly to repent.§ Yes, this was in primitive times, you say, but what thought the dark ages? Hear, then, Richard of St. Victor, who will dispel such doubts. "If," saith he, "you wish to know and can hear it patiently, a pagan is more easily reconciled after a hundred crimes than a Christian after only one. For whatever is committed by an infidel is counted a sin of ignorance, since, even if he had known that he was sinning when he sinned, yet he knew not how to examine the weight of sin; he knew not that it could only be expiated by the death of the man-God. Therefore the darkness of this ignorance immeasurably mitigates the enormity of sin; but Christians, who know that they are redeemed from death by the death of Christ, cannot be excused by ignorance."|| Iona, in his *Laical Institutes*, speaks to the same effect, and says, "that those are more severely punished

* In Lib. II. de summ. bono, cap. 16.

† Sentent. Lib. IV. Distinct. 14.

‡ Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 318.

§ Richardi S. Vict. De Potestate ligandi et solvendi, c. 6.

|| Hugo S. Vict. De Ecclesiast. Officiis, Lib. I. cap. 26.

¶ De Anima, Lib. III. c. 31.

** Hldefons. von Arx Geschichte des St. Gallen, I. 267.

* Hell. XXVII.

† Bibliothec. Patrum de la Bigne, IV.

‡ Dante, Parad. XIII.

§ Liv. de Pen. cap. 10.

|| Richard. S. Vict. De Potestate ligandi et solvendi, cap. 22.

who received the faith of Christ and finished life in sin, than those who died without faith and yet performed good deeds;" which opinion he confirms from St. Peter* and St. Luke.†

The Master of the Sentences shows that no one can be a true penitent for one sin only, unless he is so equally for all. "Nunquam aliquem sanavit Dominus quem non omnino liberavit—quem ergo pœnitet omnino pœniteat—pœnitentes, si vero estis pœnitentes, et non estis irridentes, mutate viam, reconciliamini Deo."‡

That sins were known to be forgiven in the sacrament of penance is true, but it was also well known that there might be the temporal penalty still to pay. Every one in the middle ages had heard of what the abbot Sabbatius used to relate, because it was inserted in the work of Sophronius, that while he was living in the monastery of Firminus, a robber came requesting to be admitted as a convertite, who, after nine years of probation, requested the abbot to give him back his secular habit, saying, that he believed his sins were forgiven him; that he had fasted, prayed, and lived a holy life, but that he always saw a boy standing near, and saying, "Why did you slay me?" That he saw him in the church, when he went to communion, in the refectory, in his dreams, and that he never left him. "Therefore," says he, "I am resolved to offer myself to death for that boy, for I murdered him." So he went to Diospolis, and on the next day was beheaded.§

Innumerable things, indeed, connected with the discipline of penance in the middle ages, were calculated to excite salutary fear. In the penitentiaries of the east and west, it was ordained that the penance imposed upon masters should be double of those imposed for the same sins on servants.|| "Observe," says Richard of St. Victor, "how in the description of the grief of the lovers of Babylon, kings are placed first, because in proportion as the evil were more powerful in the world, so will they be the more miserable in hell." "Potentes potenter tormenta patientur."¶ "No one more-over," as the Master of the Sentences

observed, "could worthily do penance whom the unity of the church did not sustain; for," saith he, "it is not to be believed that he can recognise his sins to conversion of life, if he cannot have part in the communion of saints."* "No one," he continues, "is truly penitent for sin, having a contrite and humble heart, unless he is in charity; and hence it follows that a conversion in death is difficult, for he who repents late must not only fear judgment but also love; since without charity no one can be saved."† Belacqua's fate, revealed to Dante, gave salutary warning to those that would to the end delay repentant sighs.‡ Alcimus Avitus, archbishop of Vienne, explains in verse the uncertainty and danger of late penance.

"Pœnitet ambigüe quem serò pœnitet: ergo
Præsentis spatium nobis dum creditur ævi,
Dum patulam cunctis Christi clementia sese
Præbet, præteritæ plangamus crimina vite,
Pœniteatque olim negligenter temporis acti,
Dum licet, et sano ingenioque, animoque va-
lemus.

Nam qui peccatum moriens dimittit, et ipsa
In serum tempus differt admissa fateri,
Non tam dimittit, quam dimittatur ab illis."

The objection against the Catholic doctrine of penance founded on the repentance of great sinners at their death, has been refuted in a masterly manner by Manzoni.§ "The man who suffers shipwreck," he remarks, "calculates ill, who from believing in the possibility of reaching land, defers leaving the wreck, for the longer he delays the greater will be the difficulty;" and such was the argument of the church to those who were inclined to delay their conversion. In fact, the clergy constantly appealed to experience which verified her predictions. "These inveterate sinners," exclaims Bourdaloue, "die as they lived. They have lived in sin, and they die in sin; they have lived in the hatred of God, and they die in the hatred of God; they have lived as pagans, and they die as the reprobate. This is what experience teaches us. To believe that habits contracted during a whole life are destroyed at the approach of death, and that, in a moment, can be gained a different mind, a different heart, a different will, is the grossest of all errors. At death above all times, it is most difficult to obtain true contrition. The time for

* II. 2. 21.

† XII. 47, 48. Ionæ Aurelianens. Episcop. de Institut. Laicali, Lib. I. c. 19.

‡ Sentent. Lib. IV. Distinct. 15.

§ Præsumptum Spirituale, cap. 166.

|| Charden, Hist. des Sacramens, Tom. II. c. 5.

¶ Super Apocalypsim, Lib. VI. c. 1.

• Super Apocalypsim, Lib. IV. 17.

+ Id. IV. 18, 19.

† Purg. IV.

§ Osservazioni sulla Morale Catholica, cap. 10.

seeking the God of mercy is life, the time for finding him is death." Hear again Masillon, "You have lived dissolute, you will die such; you have lived ambitious, you will die without the love of the world and of its vain honours having died in your heart; you have lived indolently without vice or virtue, you will die cowardly and without compunction. What does Jesus Christ declare will be the fruit of these deferred tears? 'Quæritis me, et in peccato vestro moriemini.'" "But why then," asks Manzoni, "does the church hasten to assist the dying sinner?" "Observe," he replies, in answer to this question, "that the church seems to have two languages for this matter, the one calculated to inspire terror in the strong intrepid sinner who promises himself a future time for repentance, and the other to yield confidence to the dying." In this there is no contradiction, but prudence and truth. Men in both these states are disposed only to regard one side of the question; and the church presents to them precisely that which they forget.* It is true both in life and death, the clergy, as St. Antoninus of Florence prescribed, were more prompt to loose than to bind. They marked the benignity of our adorable Lord, which had little need of entreating. His mother said no more but "Vinum non habent," and presently the water becomes wine; the leprous man had no sooner said, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean, than he heard, "Volo, mundare:" the centurion could hardly say, Lord, my boy lieth at home sick of the palsy, when he was interrupted with, "Ego veniam et curabo eum." St. Martha and Magdalen sent to him saying, "Domine, quem amas infirmatur," and he presently came with them. This was the model which guided their conduct, but as St. Chrysostom said, surely it was better to have to answer for being too merciful than for being too severe. St. Odilo, abbot of Cluni, in imposing penance, evinced rather a maternal tenderness than the command of a father, and when some reprehended his lenity, he used to reply, "Although I may be condemned, yet I would rather be condemned for mercy than for severity."† We read of St. Gerard, bishop of Toul, that it was always his custom before retiring to sleep among other prayers, to make mention by name of all those whom he had

been obliged to excommunicate, and then he absolved with merciful piety, lest sudden death should be visited upon any of them; but this he did secretly, lest he should lead them to insolent presumption; and he prayed the Almighty that he would put it into their hearts to feel the desire of reconciliation.* In other cases at least it was believed that there were exceptions in the unsearchable ways of Providence, when one might say without self-delusion, like the knight of old,

"Between the stirrup and the ground
I mercy asked, I mercy found."

Such were, no doubt, the belief and practice of the clergy in the middle ages.

"The wisest and best men
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive."

In the synodical statutes of Verdun in the year 1508, it is said that if a robber on his way to the scaffold should confess or wish to confess, he should be given the body of Jesus Christ, interred in the cemetery, and recommended in holy prayers; but let us not on that account be deceived by the misrepresentations of men who review history with the same eyes as those with which they at present travel through Catholic countries. "I am of opinion," says Manzoni, "that in Italy among those who run the deplorable career of crime, there are in our days, (and he might have gone farther back,) few or none superstitious, and many who do not care at all for the things of religion." These portraits of men issuing from the sacred tribunals to commit sins of every kind, these assassins described by Sismondi, "who observe meagre with devotion," are after all, only fictions of northern travellers, who imagine that every outlaw has a profound veneration for the church, and is a strict observer of the ecclesiastical precepts.† The real histories furnished in the sacred tribunals of Italy and Spain, are parallel to that affecting story of St. John reclaiming the young robber, which is so beautifully told by St. Clemens Alexandrinus, at the end of his book entitled "Quis Dives Salvetur." But if the doctrine and general language of the middle ages respecting penance be more

* Osservazioni sulla Morale Catholica, p. 477.

† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 318.

* Acta Tulensium Episcop. apud Martene Thesaur. Anecd. tom. III.

† Osservazioni sulla Morale Catholica, 215.

calculated to make men tremble than to criticise, what shall we say of the examples recorded in history, which show what was then understood practically by contrition? Not to revert to what we observed in the fourth book, or to anticipate what we shall meet with hereafter in the sanctuaries of peace, only reflect, reader, upon any of the innumerable instances of profound compunction for sin which are attested in the ancient annals. The unblest tears of Rinaldo in chivalrous fable may represent the beginning of this state,

"His looks he downward cast and nought he said,
Griev'd, sham'd, sad, he would have died fain,
And oft he wish'd the earth or ocean wide
Would swallow him and so his errors hide."

Yet this sorrow was only caused by the consciousness of having spent many days luxuriously in the palace of Armida.* Ah, when would the carpet champions of modern times be similarly moved by the mere view of the bright panoply of saintly warriors? St. Thomas of Canterbury had consented to receive the constitutions of Clarendon, and that act of compliance was sufficient immediately after to fill his breast with the sadness of death. "Unhappy man," cried he, as he rode back from the assembly, "I see the English church enslaved for ever in punishment of my sins! It had needs be so, I came from the court and not from the church. I was a hunter of beasts before being a pastor of men; the lover of mimics and dogs is become the conductor of souls. Behold me then abandoned by God!"† Pope Clement V. is named in the most scornful terms by the very historians who nevertheless conclude with the testimony of Villani, who says that after the trial of the templars he never smiled more: this sensibility of conscience could sometimes even give a dignity which is due to force of soul, as when Manin, the last Doge of Venice, fainted the moment after he had taken the oath to Austria according to the treaty of Campo Formio.

Let us pass to another question on which the moderns and the followers of antiquity are at issue, concerning which, if any one should ask the former immediately, as Socrates says of the sophists, "like brass that is struck upon, which emits a loud and lengthened sound, they break out into an endless discourse, unless you take

great care to stop them short."* Their constant complaint, for one cannot say objection, is, that the Catholic church, by means of indulgences destroyed the foundations of all morality and justice. Truly, to hear them on this point, as on many others, may remind one of the comment of Guibert de Nogent on the famous question addressed to our first parents, "Cur præcepit vobis Deus ne comederitis de omni ligno paradisi?" "for," saith he, "it is the custom of obscure persons to discuss the highest things rashly and proudly. Thus the serpent begins by naming God before all created things, and ends by imputing to him what he never said; for not of every tree of paradise, but only of one particular tree did he forbid man to eat."† They say that the church destroyed the foundations of morality by her doctrine of indulgences: they say so, but we are not to credit every word that they say. Not hastily according to the passion of men, "sed caute et longanimiter res est secundum Deum ponderanda." Naaman was angry and went away in disdain when he heard of the terms of God's indulgence, though it was a salutary advice which was given him by his own servants to obey the prophet.‡ Men speak against indulgences without consideration, without consistency. In the Christian religion as in nature, every thing is indulgence. Baptism, like natural birth, is the grand indulgence by which the renovation of man commences; and as St. Augustin adds, "neither can the rest of his life, from the age when he comes to the use of reason, be without the remission of sins, however inclined he may be to justice."§ Therefore, the Church feeling the depth of this mystery, and being perfectly sensible to the inadequacy of the terms offered to sinful man, says in addressing the Almighty, "Thou who dost particularly manifest thy omnipotence by sparing and showing mercy."||

That the canonical penalties of the primitive church were the origin of indulgences is clear, and that the love of justice and the desire of greater union with God inspired their institution is no less certain. If thou shalt hear henceforth another origin assigned of that which sounds so execrable in modern books, I forewarn thee now,

* XVI. 31.

† Vita Quadrip. 41.

* Protagoras.

† Moralium Geneseos, Lib. II. c. 3.

‡ Kings iv. 5.

§ S. August. Enchirid. cap. 17.

|| Coll. tenth Sund. after Pent.

that none by falsehood may beguile thee of the truth. Attend to what saith the council of Nice, "Whoever being penetrated with the fear of God shall testify by his tears, patience, and good works, that he has really changed his life, shall by the merit of prayers be re-established in communion after accomplishing the time marked for this station. Besides this, the bishop may use still greater mildness, but as for those who are not so touched, and who are little concerned about their condition, and who think it enough to come to the church, their time of penance must not be shortened."* "The right of granting indulgences," say the canons, "that is, of remitting a whole or a part of the temporal punishment of sin, was given by Christ to the apostles and their successors in the grant of the power of binding and loosing, which is exercised in its supreme degree by the head of the church, and under him with limits by other bishops and priests."† Clearly there was no more difficulty in believing the existence of this power in reference to the suffering than to the militant church; for whether it was exercised over the living penitents who smote their breasts, or over those spirits who prayed for others' prayers to hasten on their state of blessedness, the authority was equally above nature, and divine. To the arguments of those who deny the reality of any temporal punishment hereafter, a reply has been already made in a former book. Truly the answer of Sir Thomas More deserves their attention, "for as for purgatory," saith he, "though they thinke there be none, yet sith they denie not, that all the corps of Christendom by so many hundred yeres, have believed the contrarie, and among them all the olde interpretours of Scripture from the apostles' daies downe to our owne time, of whom they denie not many for holy saintes; that I dare not believe these men against all those, these men must of their curtesie hold my poore feare excused. And I beseeche our Lord heartily for them, that when they depart out of this wretched world, they find no purgatorie at all; so God kepe them from hel." Vengeance of heaven, how shouldst thou be feared by all who think upon that region of eternal peace into which nothing defiled can enter, by all who have sought to know themselves,

and who have read of that trial of every work hereafter by refining flame! O these sins, these common venial sins, how hugely and gigantically they swell out! How horrible it is to see their consequences unfolding themselves far away in the realms of the future! how they take root and grow up riotously in after generations! what hope for man but in remission and indulgence!

Here again, as in the question of penance, the doctrine of the Church need only be stated to be at once justified. To say that this ascribes to human virtues an efficacy beyond what sacred wisdom warrants, is to evince a total ignorance of the Catholic doctrine, for in order that works may merit it is required that the party who worketh be in a state of grace and an adopted child of God; so that all works are excluded from meriting, which are performed by one who is not in a state of grace, that is, who wanteth true faith, true hope, true charity; and besides the free promise and covenant of God is necessary, and these very works take their merit from Christ. They say that the merits of the saints, and the sacrifice of the mass, which are the secondary source of indulgence, are an injury to the all-sufficient sacrifice of the cross, "but," asks Bossuet, "when Christ coming into the world devoted himself wholly to God that he might be in place of those victims which did not please him,* did he do an injury to his immolation on the cross? and when he now appears before God for us,† does he take away from that oblation with which he once offered himself? And when he ever intercedeth for us,‡ does he show that the intercession was imperfect which he made for us with tears at his death.§ Nay, on that account is the sacrifice of the cross perfect, because whatever preceded and whatever follows it are wholly referred to it; the antecedents as a preparation, the consequents as its consummation and application. If you say that indulgences have been abused, we may reply with the angel of the school, that there is nothing which human malice cannot abuse, since it abuses even the goodness of God."|| But then, on the other hand, we must not at once admit every thing to be an abuse which the moderns affirm to be such. Hear what

* Con. Nic. c. 12.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. II. tit. III. § 1.

* Heb. x. 25.

+ Id. ix. 24.

† Id. vii. 25.

§ Id. v. 17.

|| Summ. Theolog. P. III. 9. 3. art. 8.

St. Ambrose saith. "We have many subsidiary means by which we can redeem our sins. Have you money? Redeem your sin. The Lord is not venal, but you yourself are venal: redeem yourself by your works; redeem yourself by your money."* We have before seen that the cathedrals, monasteries, hospitals, bridges, and other public monuments of the middle age, are so many memorials of this kind of redemption: nevertheless, Thomassinus remarks, "that St. Petrus Damianus, who relates the compensations appointed by the church in the middle ages for the remission of the temporal penalty of sins, was so far from suspecting the church of any view to her own emolument, that the thought never appears to have entered his mind, though against the plague of avarice and corruption he boils over if he can but detect a trace of it any where."† "Sane cavendum est," say the decrees of Ives de Chartres, "ne quisquam existimet infanda illa crimina, qualia qui agunt regnum Dei non possidebunt quotidie perpetranda et eleemosynis quotidie redimenda. In melius est quippe vita mutanda et per eleemosynas de peccatis præteritis est propitiandus Deus."‡ That abuses, however, did prevail in the fifteenth century, in the dispensation of indulgences, was never questioned; but to qualify rightly and yet in language of moderation the inference drawn from that fact by modern historians, would be difficult. Manzoni in admitting and deploring the evil, asks, "Do the excessive concessions of indulgences interfere with the principles of morality?" To which he answers, "No, at no time." The manner of dispensing indulgences, as Bossuet observes, regards discipline. This being the case, their excessive concession would be an abuse. Now the Catholic church is constituted in such a manner that abuses can never alter the principles of morality, because these are without the sphere of discipline and are placed in that of faith. So that every essential principle of morality being an article of faith, it can only be destroyed by a doctrine establishing a contrary principle. Therefore the principles of morality remain untouched notwithstanding the possible excess in the concession of indulgences.§ Besides, to whom were indulgences appli-

cable? "The prelates of the church," says Duns Scotus, who states and refutes the most acute and subtle objections to indulgences,* "can from the treasury of the church confer indulgences on members of the church, that is, on men existing in charity, otherwise they are not members capable of receiving the influence of others, as a dead member in a natural body cannot receive an influence or any nourishment from others. 'Unusquisque onus suum portabit,' say the objectors. True, but on the other hand, 'alter alterius onera portate;' the first should be understood of the eternal punishment in which no one is punished for another, although temporally one man is well punished for another even by God."† No one unworthy of having his temporal penalty paid by another's satisfaction, could truly gain the fruit of an indulgence; for whoever neglected to satisfy by himself was unworthy to have the satisfaction of others applied to the discharge of his debt.‡ Besides, what was an indulgence in relation to the eternal law of justice? It was after all but part of it. William of Paris says, "that many prudent men affirm a dispensation to be a law, and not a diminution of law, or a derogation from a law, because the cause for which it is granted renders it so just that the legislator himself would have required it." You hear of vows being changed by dispensation; but how? Dante answers that question with theological precision—

"Nor deem of any change as less than vain,
If the last bond be not within the new
Included, as the quatre in the six."§

And who were the persons who abused indulgences? Were they infidels who rejected and scorned whatever came through the church? Were they libertines who never took the trouble to listen to their conditions? Were they devout persons who knew that to gain them, those interior dispositions are absolutely essential which remove the possibility of their being abused? Moreover, what these objectors call mere external observances did mean and involve something more in the common estimation of men than they suspect. When Henry the Second pretended to be reconciled with St. Thomas, by the interposition of the king of France, in the interview at Chinou, king Henry ordered that for mass of recon-

* S. Ambrosii, Lib. de Elia et Jejunio, cap. 20.

† De Vet. et Nova Ecclesiæ Disciplin. Pars III. Lib. I. cap. 30.

‡ Ivonis Carnot. Decret. Pars XIII. de Speculativis Sentent. cap. 121.

§ Osservazioni sulla Morale Catholica, 197.

* Duns Scoti Miscellaneorum, 9. IV.

† Id. 9. VI.

‡ La Hogue de Purgatorio, Art. III.

§ Parod. V.

ciliation, a mass for the dead should be said, because at that the kiss of peace was not given.* Queen Jeanne persuaded the Regent of France to have an interview with Charles, king of Navarre. A treaty was signed; the bishop of Lisieux said mass, and would have given the communion to both; but the king of Navarre, who believed in the religion which he outraged, refused to receive under pretence of his having broken his fast.† If even against political interests these principles were proof how much more must they have prevailed in the ordinary action of less excited life?

The instructors of the middle ages were continually reminding the people of what Masillon observed in his charge on the publication of the Jubilee, in the year 1724. "Let us not think," said he, "that the graces of the church have purified us, if they have not changed us. Let us depend upon her indulgence only in proportion as we can depend upon our own sincere repentance." "No one besides," as Sardagna remarks, "without an especial revelation could be certain that he had gained an indulgence."‡

I am aware that from this very solicitude of the clergy to guard against the misinterpretation of indulgences, and their frequent admonitions against being content with observing certain religious practices, while neglecting indispensable duties, some writers have argued that such an abuse was common. Manzoni replies to them as follows: "To understand this subject, we must distinguish two degrees, or rather two kinds of goodness, that with which the world is content, and that desired by the Gospel, and inculcated by its ministers. The world, for its own sake, desires that men should refrain from crimes, but the Gospel requires not alone the avoiding disorders, and the observance of blameless manners in the eyes of men, but the spirit of Jesus Christ crucified. It is the want of this spirit which is the object of the Catholic priest's complaint, who fears lest men, in the external practice of religious duties, by living in the world, should forget the supernatural end which ought to direct the Christian. But those whom he thus advises and cautions, are men whom the world has no right to bewail: they are the best among its children, and if the Church is not content with that degree

of virtue, it is because she excites them to proceed to an order of holiness, of which the world has no knowledge. Having no other interest than the salvation of men, she requires the virtue which tends to perfection, not that which may be useful to the preacher."*

Finally, if we consider the nature of the indulgences, though we should omit to speak of those great and arduous works of charity and piety, to which they gave rise during the middle ages, and should only confine our view to the interior and spiritual exercises which were implied in their acquisition, it will require no singular perspicuity of genius, and no bias in favour of antiquity, to discern their admirable tendency in relation to the exercise of the highest justice. No doubt the obligation of many actions, required as conditions of indulgences, seem incommensurate with the offered grace; but as Manzoni observes, "it is impossible to conceive a system of morality or rule of life, in which there are not obligations of various kinds, and of different degrees of importance. The perfect morality would be that in which all the obligations would proceed from one principle, and be directed to one sole end, and that most holy;—and such is the Catholic morality." If there were indulgences for those who accompanied the holy viaticum from the church to the sick man's house, and thence back to the church, if there were indulgences on visiting certain churches, on assisting at the dedication of others, as in the year 1040, to all who repaired to St. Victor's, at Marseilles, and to all who assisted at the dedication of the church of Monte Cassino if there was an indulgence for all who being contrite and confessed, should enter the cemetery of St. Callixtus, pope and martyr, where a hundred and seventy-four thousand martyrs were buried with forty-six popes—*qui omnes ex magna tribulatione venerunt, et ut hæredes fierent in domo Domini mortis supplicium pro Christi nomine pertulerunt*,† if there were indulgences for all who repeated certain prayers, on hearing the great bell of the cathedral of Grenada tolled every afternoon at three o'clock, in memory of the deliverance of that city from the Moors, that being the hour when the Cardinal, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, planted the cross on the highest tower of the Alhambra, while the Count of Tendilla displayed the knightly banner of Castille, and

* Vit. Quadrip. 109.

† La France sous les cinq. Premiers Valois, II. 125.

‡ Sardagna Theolog. Dogmat. tom. VIII. art. VII. c. 8.

* Osservaz. sulla Morale Cattolica, 222.

† Aringhi Rom. Subter. 232.

Don Gutierre de Cardenas that of St. Iago, while Ferdinand and Isabella sunk upon their knees, exclaiming, *Non nobis, Domine, sed tibi sit gloria*, on which spot a chapel was immediately erected, which stands to the present day,—the one motive by which these and a thousand other similar exercises were converted into channels of heavenly grace, was charity, the union of the soul with God, or, in other words, the love of God and the love of man. Separate from this principle, many of these acts may indeed seem trifling and inconsiderable, but as Hugo of St. Victor says, “in parvo opere magna devotio potest esse.”* A pilgrim at least will be little disposed to cavil here, who remembers what fervent devotion was excited in his breast, when at Rome and elsewhere he visited such places, when he kissed the cross upon the gates of St. Paul and of St. Lorenzo—when he ascended upon his knees those mystic steps which recall the passion of the man-God—when he saw lifted over him that rod of discipline at the threshold of the holy Apostles—when he drank from the fountains at the Salvian waters where the chosen One received his crown. There is, one might say, transferring the poet's image to express higher things, a tide in the spiritual affairs of men, which when taken at the flood, leads on to paradise; omitted, all the voyage of their life seems left unprotected by influence divine; we must take the current of justice, as of human felicity, when it serves, or lose our ventures, for, as Cardan saith, *nostra omnia momentanea sunt*. Moments there are in life, especially in its early years, when from the presence of such objects as recall the mind to a sense of religion, to a memory of all that the divine Jesus suffered, and of all that his saints in successive ages have endured, men, the most cold and thoughtless, feel suddenly inflamed with a seraphic ardour of spirit, to love and serve God with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their strength, and are ready to exclaim with a most generous passion, though we should die with thee, yet will we not betray thee in any wise. Oh heavens! were man but constant, he were perfect; that one error fills him with faults, and makes him run through all sins. Now, the object of these indulgences was to make him, in regard to these impressions, constant; it was to multiply and protract these blessed intervals; to make, as it were, the time of flood in the soul recur at short inter-

vals, in order that he might have many ventures, many periods of excitement; it was to give him habits of making acts of faith, hope, and charity, so that at length, from many repetitions and returns, becoming constant, he might attain to the perfection and immortal felicity of his nature. The exercises to which indulgences were attached, were generally such as of all others in the moral order that can be conceived, are most worthy of an immortal intelligence. There were indulgences attached to the daily recital of the Trisagion and Gloria Patri,* to making acts of faith, hope, and charity,† to praying for the exaltation of the church, the peace and concord of Christian princes, and the extirpation of error,‡ to the invocation of the holy name of Jesus, to the examination of conscience, to the conversion of sinners in withdrawing them from immorality, heresy, blasphemy, detraction, or calumny, to the reconciliation of enemies, to the showing reverence to Christ's blessed mother, to meditation on the cross, or visiting the stations, to prayer in memory of our Lord's crucifixion on Fridays, at three o'clock,§ to spending the three hours of agony on Good Friday in prayer or meditation, to visiting devoutly, with proper dispositions, the seven churches of Rome,|| to the recitation of the Angelus, or the Regina Cæli three times every day,¶ to the sanctification of the month of May by devoting it to the contemplation of the graces of Mary, to the recitation of the prose *stabat mater*,** to receiving communion on the festival of St. Louis Gonzagua, the patron of youth,†† to the instruction of others in mental prayer,‡‡ or in the Christian doctrine,§§ to performing the works of mercy, nourishing three poor persons in honour of the holy family, to the visiting of hospitals, or houses of refuge, to the visitation of prisoners, to the enabling of the poor to marry, to wearing medals, or crucifixes, or chaplets, that had been given to one's self, which had touched the holy places, or the relics of the holy land,||| to a good preparation for death, to an act of resignation daily renewed.¶¶ Are these exercises trivial and ridiculous? Is the hope of grace, upon condition of performing them with the dis-

* By Clement XIII.

+ Bened. XIII. XIV.

† Greg. XIII.

§ Bened. XIV.

|| St. Greg. the Great.

¶ Bened. XIII. XIV.

** Innocent XI.

++ Bened. XIII.

†† Bened. XIV.

§§ Clement. XII.

||| Innocent. XI.

¶¶ Vide Manuel des Dévotions et Indulgences autorisées par le Saint Siège.

* Hug. S. Vict. De Sacramentis, Pars XIV. 3.

positions implied, unjust or inconsistent with the wisdom of God, that learned men of the modern discipline should place the Apostolic Brief, confining it in their cabinets of curiosities amidst the idols of Egypt, to be displayed before the white, upturned wondering eyes of fools, that fall back as if afraid to gaze upon it? Truly, that indulgences should furnish mirth in the circle of libertines, or in the school of those sophists

who have an exchequer of words, and no other treasure to give their followers, will surprise no one; but, setting aside all theological argument, he that cannot discern the force and facility which they yield to virtue, whatever diplomas he may have taken out, or whatever academic walks he may have haunted, methinks should not be chronicled for wise.

CHAPTER IX.



WE have seen the heroic and supernatural character of the Catholic morality, but there are still many remarkable points of difference distinguishing it from the system of human philosophers, and from that of the modern societies in general, of which I have not yet given an historical illustration. To contrast the manners of the Christian republic in its happiest ages, with those of the ancient world, would be a still less subtle exercise than tracing the contrast between the Gospel and the philosophic writings of the Gentiles. To review the heathen manners falls not to our province; and that writer may indeed be an object of compassion who is condemned to approach a subject so horrible and so revolting. Moreover, there can be but few who need being reminded in general of the revolution which had been wrought in the law and practice of manners by the Redeemer. It confers no benefit, methinks, to compose a picture in hard prominent outlines, or abounding in sharp transitions from light to shadow. It may be left to others, therefore, to represent the contrast between classic and sacred Italy—between the times which beheld by luxury more than Roman conquests, and those when Sybaris was an episcopal see, and Capua a nurse of martyrs. But in answer to those who represent the highest justice and perfect morality, as independent of Catholic manners, fain would I something say. The moral teachers of antiquity are painted by each other with such precision, that we can hardly feel at a loss respecting the character which should be ascribed to them. Who of them, asks Cicero, regards his discipline not as an

ostentation of science, but as a law of life? Some are addicted to such levity and boasting, that it would be better for them never to have learned aught. Some are greedy of money; others of glory; many are the slaves of lust, so that their discourse differs prodigiously from their life.* In the most exquisite of all the Platonic writings we have the same contrast to the severity of Catholic manners in the language of Agatho's philosophic guests, who allude with such effrontery to their yesterday's debauch, desiring now one and all, that there may be a temperate meeting and no drunkenness, particularly as they have not yet recovered from the effects of their last banquet, agreeing that they should now only drink for pleasure, and not to intoxication.† Nepos, writing to Cicero, says, "So far am I from regarding philosophy as the mistress of life, and the source of happy life, that I think no men have such need of masters to instruct them in living, as the greatest part of those who are occupied in their disputations; for I see that the men who prescribe rules of continence and modesty most artfully in the school, live devoted to all kinds of lust. Seneca was of the same opinion, and Cicero repeatedly shows that the men who had any virtue in Greece and Rome were not formed by the discipline of philosophy, but by following ancient traditions." S. Clemens Alexandrinus presses hard upon the heathen philosophers, reminding them of the manners of their own heroic models. "Phoenix," saith he, "was the tutor of Achilles, and Adrastus

* Tuscul. II. 4.

† Plato, Symposium, cap. 4.

of the sons of Cæsus, Leonidas of Alexander, and Nausithous of Philip. Phœnix was abandoned to the love of women; Adrastus was a run-away; Leonidas did not subdue the pride of the Macedonians, nor did Nausithous cure the drunkard of Pella. The Thracian Zopurus was not able to restrain the licentiousness of Alcibiades; and Sikinnus, the tutor of Themistocles' sons, used to be caught dancing the Satyr's dance.* Socrates and Glaucus agree with the opinion so eloquently proclaimed by modern statesmen and legislators, that a man will do many things while alone, which he would not dare to do if any eyes were upon him, and which he would not tolerate in any one else; and that he will differ greatly when alone in secret, and when he is exposed to the view of other men.† "Who ascribed the highest authority to the Roman senate?" asks an orator who carried his love of heathen antiquity to extravagance. "He who stript it of all. Who consulted the Chaldeans and the Magi? The same man who banished them from the city. The same was cruel, and in semblance kind, grasping and able to pass for liberal. He built temples, and he laughed at religion; he rejected aliens, and he despised his country; he did not approve of fraud in an enemy, without which he never approached either friend or foe. But a man, wholly wic'ed, is never without an appearance of virtue."‡ Varro thought it necessary to deceive the multitude, and leave it in the superstition of the civil theology; and St. Augustin exclaims, "Spectacles of turpitude and license of vanities are instituted at Rome, not by the vices of men, but by the order of your gods."§ What a contrast to the teachers of the Christian ages, who taught the people of God what was between the holy and the corrupt, between the clean and the unclean? It is true there are lofty views of morality and justice in the writings of some of the philosophers; but, as Persius said, men regarded more what Jupiter did than what Plato taught, or Cato judged. And after all what were these philosophers, in regard to morals, if compared to any humble obscure monk of the middle age? "We do not compare Plato," says St. Augustin, "to any holy angel of highest God, nor to any true prophet, nor to any Apostle, nor to any martyr of Christ, nor to any Christian man."||

* Clemens Alex. Pæd. Lib. I. c. 7.

† Plato, de Repub. Lib. X.

‡ Heinsii Orat. XVII.

§ De Civ. Dei, Lib. I. 32. || Id. Lib. II. 14.

Pliny says, "*Nihil esse miserius vel superbius homine.*" But when the house was built after the captivity, when the holy church arose after the reign of demons, it might have been truly said, nothing more happy than man in the attainment of the beatitudes, or more humble in the accomplishment of their law. The deeds of heathen virtue cannot stand the test of the Catholic standard. "That Lucretia should have chosen death," says St. Augustin, "argued not the charity of modesty, but the infirmity of shame. This was a Roman woman, too greedy of praise. Christian women would not have done this who live after suffering such things, who neither punish others in themselves nor add a crime of their own to the crime of others.*" The detestable iniquity of Junius Brutus was useless to the republic, although to perpetrate this crime,

"*Vicit amor patriæ laudumque immensa cupido.*"

St. Augustin, in two lines, reveals the whole difference between the Christian chivalry and the ancient heroic character, but it is a separation as wide as between heaven and earth; "for the latter," he says, "did not love glory on account of justice, but seemed to love justice on account of glory.† It is useless, however, to remain here any longer; let us proceed, though we shall have to enter upon a more painful investigation, having to point out the contrast between Catholic manners, the manners of faith, which prevailed during the ages involved in this history, and those of the modern societies, which have abandoned that faith for views and principles which they pronounce to be more worthy of highly civilized and enlightened men. "Morality, at present, is better understood," says the great master of our age, whose fables are recommended by ministers of Germany, as the best sources of religious instruction. If so, our whole course hitherto must have led you, reader, in a false direction; but the facts and observations which I propose to offer, will enable, I conceive, every impartial judge to discover the fallacy of that opinion. When the new religions were first set up publicly in Christendom, it was little thought by those who changed the rule of faith, that the rule of manners was also to be revolutionized. It is true there were some wise heads, which predicted that this would be inevitably the final result; and it is certain,

* De Civ. Lib. I. 19.

† Id. Lib. V. 22.

of Arragon dying at Barcelona, after receiving all the sacraments and hearing the Passion and the seven psalms, remained silent, and being told they thought him dead, but suddenly opening his eyes, he cried out, "O the vain thoughts of men! O the misery of those who seek prince-doms, and affect riches and honours! O happy the poor, and their secure and blessed life, who eat their bread in the sweat of their faces, and who live with the labour of their hands! For what hath a kingdom, what have honours and the respect of many profited wretched me? What have so many labours and such dangers of body and soul? O wretched man, who hast learned so late the deceit of the world, and who would certainly have lived a better life if, instead of being a king, he had been a poor cultivator of the ground." His brother Alfonso dying at Naples, had expressed himself nearly in the same words.*

The one house of the Signori della Scala can show a succession of six princes who all evinced by their deeds an absence of ambition. Witness that great Albert, elected after the downfall of the tyrant Eccelino, duke of Verona, by the whole people, "in honour of God and of his blessed mother and all the saints, and for the welfare of the city," as the original instrument states, who governed with such humility and mercy, adorned the city with so many magnificent and religious monuments, cheered and refreshed the long-oppressed people with so many splendid festivities, and died so lamented, that all the citizens spontaneously clothed themselves in black, and suffered their beards to grow during the space of a whole year; who, after governing the state twenty-three years with the utmost glory, charged his sons on his death-bed to bury him without an epitaph in the church of St. Mary the ancient. Witness again his son and successor, Bartholomeo, of most benignant and pacific disposition, the friend rather of the people than of the nobility, devoted to religion, visiting the churches, assisting daily at mass, so charitable that the poor in crowds used to await his rising from table, when all that remained on it used to be distributed among them, and who, after this truly Christian life and a short reign, commanded at his death, that he should have the funeral of a private man; which

orders were obeyed, when all the poor of the city followed, weeping and lamenting the loss of their father; to whom succeeded his brother, Alboino, another meek, pacific man, so that his youngest brother, Can Francesco, was associated with him in the government, for the conduct of military operations, who was afterwards known as Can Grande, whom Dante praised as the great Lombard who received him in his exile, who also evinced a noble preference of virtue to ambition, for having promised Alboino, on his death bed, that his sons should succeed, as he himself wanted legitimate male issue, immediately on his brother's death, assumed Albert, the eldest of his nephews, as his associate in the government, which act of fidelity endeared him to the people, who knew how he loved his own sons. This Albert showed himself equally remote from ordinary ambition, for on the death of his uncle Can Grande, he might have succeeded alone to the supreme power, since at the last ratification of their government at Milan, before the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, there had been added an express clause, that when one of the ruling princes died without a son, the other should succeed him without an associate. Nevertheless, he chose to follow the custom of his ancestors, and accordingly assumed Mastino, his younger brother, for his colleague in the government, to whom he soon gave up the whole power, retaining nothing for himself but the veneration and love of the people; and when Mastino died, he caused his own son, the second Can Grande, to be proclaimed, who on his father's death, which followed shortly after, furnished the last proof of the virtue which had distinguished his family, by refusing to take anything from the people, but what his father had left him; with whom perished all the greatness of that house, which thenceforth furnished only memorable examples to mankind of divine justice in avenging a brother's murder.*

Let it not be forgotten that during the middle ages, both owing to the general prevalence of Catholic manners, and also to the peculiar organization of society, it was often the most just, the most religious men, who attained to the chief power in the government of human affairs, and to the possession of the greatest influence in the direction of states. What modesty in

* Lucii Marini Siculi de Rebus Hispanie, Lib. XVIII.

* Torelli Sarayns Hist. et Gesta Veronensium, Lib. II. Theaur. Antiq. Ital. IX.

Andrea Contareno, who would not accept the dignity of doge of Venice, until threatened with exile if he refused? What justice in the doge Michael Maurocenus, who would have put his own son to death in prison, if not prevented by the senators, for having seduced and betrayed a virgin?*

To show the grandeur and immortal glory of the Venetian republic, Aretino deemed it enough to name one alone of her dukes, Francis Foscari, a man who for prudence, justice, humanity, and wisdom, might be fearlessly opposed to all antiquity.† What piety, innocence, and justice, marked the whole life of Octavianus Fulgosius, commander of Genoa, who amidst violent civil dissensions, was dear to men of all parties, and who, after resigning his authority, gave himself wholly to religion, becoming so venerable that the holy sovereign pontiffs corresponded with him.‡ Again, what legislative and political wisdom and justice, in every page of the old Spanish chronicles, recording the deeds and conversation of their kings! Read the discourse on the death of Alfonso the Magnanimous, seventeenth king of Arragon, to Gabriel of Sorrentum, his familiar friend, or that which he addressed to his son Ferdinand, when the latter was going against the Florentines, in which he said, "Then only will military arts profit you, when you render God propitious to you by piety and deeds of justice."§

What an example of the same justice on a throne, in that Marquis Adelbert of Lucca, who died in 917, on whose tomb, containing also his wife Berta, in the cathedral of Lucca, you may read these verses in ancient characters:

"Hic populi leges, saxi, sub mole sepulchri,
Hic jus, paxque jacet, hic patriæ auxilium.
Hic cubat ala, scutum, dolor, lacrimæque repostæ;
Hic oculus cæci, hic pietas viduæ,
Pes claudi, vestis nudi, solamen egeni,
Noëter Adalbertus Dux pius atque bonus.
Quam fortis fuerit, noverunt ultima Tiliæ;
Qua bonitate fuit, dicere lingua nequit.
In sexto decimo Septembre notante Calendas
Hic posuit membra a funereo gemitu.
Quisque legis tumulum, culparum facta suarum
Ante Deum recita, in precibusque juva.||

The tomb of Winrich von Kniprode at

* Italia Sacra, V. 1166.

† De præstant. virorum sui ævi.

‡ Uberti Folietæ clarorum Ligurum Elogia. Antiq. Italise, Tom. I.

§ Lucii Marinini Siculi de Reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. XI.
|| Italia Sacra, I. 802.

Marienburg, upon which an armed knight is sculptured, is nearly consumed by time, so as hardly to exhibit any letters that are legible to indicate his name, "but," adds Voigt, "his virtues have raised him an imperishable monument in the memory of men, for his name can never be forgotten, as long as men shall retain any reverence for what is great and noble. With the piety of a monk, he joined the wisdom of a great legislator and the courage of an heroic warrior. No one ever weighed the sceptre and the sword with such advantage to his country." "Seldom," says John von Müller, "do we find in history the renown of the best of men associated along with that of being the most important and influential. In Winrich we have both."* But though such examples, throughout the whole course of history are rare, they were sufficiently numerous during the middle ages, as to render them unlike all other epochs in the annals of mankind.

To nations preserving the traditions and manners of faith, the Catholic church might have truly applied the words of Minerva in Æschylus, and have predicted to them that wondrous and supernatural state of temporal felicity, which consisted not in the possession of a constitution more worthy of renown than that of Sparta, not in an exemption from the disorders and punishment consequent upon sin, but in the establishment and permanence of institutions admirably designed to satisfy the wants and to diminish the sufferings of humanity. "Doing this," she might have said, "you will have a state such as no other race of men possesses."

οὐτ' ἐν Σκίῳσι, οὐτὲ Πέλοπος ἐν τόποις.†

Let us, however, consider this national justice in detail. The political morals of the middle ages were not Machiavellian. Dante represents fraud as more hateful to God than force. The Anglo-Gallican system of non-intervention would have been deemed more odious than any open violence however unjust. Philip of Macedon, it was said, could deceive and captivate the prudence of the Phocians, the magnanimity of the Thebans, the manly virtue of the Lacedæmonians, the wisdom of Athens; this was an ability which would have won no honour in the heroic ages of our history.

* Voigt. Geschichte Preussens, V.

† Eumenid. 702.

The political science of the middle ages did not indicate a contempt for all sacred obligations. Varro, whom the ancients called a liberal, and whom Cicero styled a man most acute, et sine ulla dubitatione doctissimus, in his books treated first on human and afterwards on divine things, for which he assigned this reason, that cities existed before their institutions, so that divine things were instituted by men; as the painter existed before the picture, and the builder before the house, so did cities before their institutions. That the absurdity of such an opinion was sufficiently clear to men in the middle ages, may be witnessed in the first chapter of the constitution, framed at Genoa, on the restoration of its liberty, by Andrew Doria, which begins by setting forth that the future grandeur and happiness of the republic will depend upon the degree of reverence which it evinces for the Christian religion, and then charges in consequence all rulers and persons in authority to protect the clergy and the property of the monastic orders for the honour and security of the whole state.* John, King of Arragon, said at his death to his son Ferdinand, who was to succeed him, "For the love of me, I ask and implore you that you will always prefer divine to human things. Let nothing be ever dearer to you than the worship of God, nothing higher in your eyes than virtue, and do nothing without the counsel of just men."† There was then no kingdom or republic of which God was not considered the supreme Ruler. Heinsius, though a disciple of the modern school, and one who admits that the power of no republic or kingdom is sufficiently great, unless there be a greater authority by which it may stand and fall, says that Plato was wise in pronouncing a king to be a human god in political relations.‡ It was one of the counsels of Fenelon to the Duke of Burgundy, in his plan for the government of France, to beware of the exorbitant opinion of the parliamentarians; and so little importance does Milton seem to attach to those provisions which are now thought so essential to every free and happy state, that he recommends an unchanging administration. "Although," he says, "it may seem strange at first hearing, by reason that men's minds are possessed with the notion of

successive parliaments, I affirm, that the grand or general council, being well chosen, should be perpetual."* To the humble and unpretending statesmen of the middle ages, such an affirmation would not have seemed to argue greater wisdom than his invectives against kings. "There should, be a succession of magistrates," says Giles of Colonna, instructing Philippe-Bel, "and places of dignity should not be always left with the same persons. Both, in order that the justice of many citizens, which can only be tried by placing them in official situations, may be proved, that the idea of responsibility and of returning to private life may prevent persons in power from abusing it, and also that no class of citizens may deem themselves despised from being always excluded, and so become discontented and hostile to the government."† Still, we must distinguish here: the modern societies reckon public men among their best supporters. Public affairs engross much of their time; but the Catholics of the middle ages were like the primitive Christians, of whom Tertullian bears this testimony: "Nobis nulla res magis aliena quam publica."‡ It was not, therefore, with the Catholic monarchies of Europe as with the Greeks at the breaking out of the Peloponnesian war, when Thucydides says, "every one supposed that the greatest obstacle to the success of public affairs would be his own absence from them."§ Let there, however, be no mistake here. The Catholic religion inspired noble sentiments of personal freedom, and created states that were admirably designed for securing it to the subjects of an hereditary sovereign. "If any one," say the laws of the Visigoths, "should permit himself to be sold, in order afterwards to take advantage, and deceive the purchaser, let him not be heard, but he must remain in the servitude which he has chosen—quoniam non est dignus ut liber sit qui se volens subdidit servituti."|| The political maxim of the middle ages was that of Æschylus, "praise not anarchy or tyranny."

Μὴτ' ἀπαρκτον βίον,
μῆτε δεσποσύμενον
αἰώνος.¶

* A ready and easy way to establish a free commonwealth, p. 602.

† De Regimine Prin. Lib. III. p. 1. c. 13.

‡ Apolog. 38.

§ Lib. II. 8.

|| Legis Visigothorum, Lib. V. tit. IV. 10.

¶ Eumenid. 526.

* Thesaurus Antiq. Italise, Tom. I.

† Lucii Marinæ Siculi, de reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. XVIII.

‡ Orat. XVII.

These governments did not indeed seek to persuade men that they were truly free, because they had written on a sheet of paper the word liberty, and posted it up at all corners. Liberty, in the sense of ages of faith, was not a placard in a street. It was a living power, the protection of the domestic hearth, the guarantee of social institutions, and of individual habits. But, on the other hand, there was no attempt to represent the justice and Christianity of a people, as depending on the form of their government, or the merit of their political system; there was no anarchy or confusion of degree. Domination, which enters of necessity into every form of efficient rule, was not considered despotism; for, as Plato says, "He who has the power to govern, if any good is to come from him, must not ask the consent of those who are to be governed."* The words of St. Anselm, both in a political and moral point of view, were received as truth, when he said, "*Posse peccare non est libertas; nec pars libertatis.*" "I leave you free as to both men," said Marinus the hermit, in his last words to the citizens of the mountain republic bearing his name, of which, after flying from Dalmatia, during the persecution of Diocletian, he became the founder and legislator.† This was the idea of freedom nourished, and often realized in Catholic states. The Catholic spirit in general tended to ennoble infinitely the political character of man; for, as St. Augustin says, "pride tends to degrade and humiliate man by subjecting him to an equal, but pious humility makes him subject to a superior; for there is nothing superior to God, and therefore humility exalts man which subjects him to God."‡ Such were the Catholic notions of independence; but the modern progress was then unknown, according to which, at first, God and justice are taken from the minds of men, and then the legitimate prince is taken from the state, to make room for an odious and ignoble despotism, for wickedness never ceases where it begins, but as Pythagoras said, it is infinite, always encroaching and gliding on. How much did the Catholic doctrine and the doctrine of the reformers differ? the former taught men to honour the king, to obey governors.

"As against the person of the prince," say the laws of the Visigoths, "we forbid any one to practise violence, so do we pro-

hibit any one to place on him a brand of crime, or to apply to him words of malediction; for the authority of sacred Scripture commands us to receive no opprobrious charge against our neighbour, and therefore, he who calumniates or speaks evil of the prince, is guilty; so that, whoever accuses or calumniates the prince, instead of providing measures for having him humbly and secretly admonished of his life, and who shall presume, proudly and contumaciously, to insult his name, whether he be noble, priest, or laic, shall, on conviction, forfeit the half of his goods."* "Not to wish to obey kings or laws," says Giles of Colonna, "is, according to ancient philosophers, and the saying of Homer, to be rather beasts than men, rather slaves than free." Such were the words of believers in the middle ages, and so deeply did they take root, that the sentiment of loyalty became universal, and associated in the minds of the people with every thing generous and manly. "To be convicted of rebellion against my prince," says Tasso, "would have involved me in a state of exile, not alone from Ferrara or Naples, but from the whole world. Excluded I should be from all friendship, and conversation, and knowledge, and comfort, from all grace, and in every place and time equally scorned and abominated: which punishment is so grievous, that if it were without hope, death, beyond all doubt, would not appear much greater; and, perchance, to a man brave and magnanimous, such as I recognise myself not to be, it would be esteemed a much minor one."† This was in conformity with the sentiments and manners of just men in all former times.

Socrates reminded his friend, who entreated him to fly from prison, and so escape the unjust persecutions of the government of his country, that wherever he went, if to an honourable people he would be regarded with just suspicion and aversion. If he were to seek an asylum at Thebes or at Megara, which are virtuous states, he would appear there as an enemy. As many as take an interest in the welfare of their countrymen would look upon him as a destroyer of the laws of his own country, and one whose escape and flight justified the charges that had been brought against him, of his being a corrupter of youth, for they would argue that whoever does his best to destroy the

* De Repub. VI.

† Italia Sacra, tom. II. 844.

‡ De Civ. Dei. Lib. XIV. 13.

* Legis Visigothorum, Lib. II. VIII.

† Discorso sopra vari accidenti della sua vita scritto a Scipion Gonzaga.

laws by endeavouring to prevent their execution, must necessarily be a corrupter of the young and of the unwise. If he were to fly to a country of wicked men and of evil government, what advantage would he derive from life? * It was the same in the time of St. Ambrose. Witness the words of the holy bishop to those who prepared to fly on the invasion of the Barbarians. "Let us suppose," he says, "that you have courage to endure the injuries of the journey. Tell me what liberty of life you will be able to enjoy among foreigners, when the moment you begin to speak it will be objected to you, 'Whence comes this exile? Whence is this fugitive? He wishes to oppress our state as he has injured his own!' Trust me, you are about to hear in foreign lands the same language which you have often used to others in your own." † I am not ignorant of the union of nations, which Christianity gradually effected, nor of the heroic and magnanimous deeds of mercy which were its fruit. Still it is curious to contrast this reasoning with the language of the sophists of our time, who regard all persons exiled, though for the greatest outrages against the institutions of their country, as men to be received with open arms, with triumph, and public applause, and who consider such a reception to be the greatest proof of a nation's advance in civilization. To the agents of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century must the first avowal of such sentiments be traced. Although it may not shame their descendants to read a lecture of their recorded offences, we find amongst them one heinous article, containing the lawless deposing of a king, and cracking the strong warrant of an oath, marked with a blot, damned in the book of heaven. They taught the people to oppress, if it had been oppressed, and to invade the republic in which it had served. So that at length, to be convicted of rebellion against a prince became a passport, which entitled the bearer to be received with the honours due to just men in every nation, in which the modern philosopher could boast of disciples. In this respect, indeed, the first founders of the school left little for those who came after them to bring to perfection.

"Princes," says Calvin, "deprive themselves of all power when they oppose God: (by which he meant the new doctrines;) and it is better in such cases to spit in their faces than to obey them," which irreverence

yet he never learned from the example of any apostle. When the boors of Germany rose in rebellion, Luther wrote to censure them, but in such a manner as to inflame them more than ever. "Know, Lords," says he to the German princes, "that God has so ordained, that they neither can, nor ought, to be subject to you." Knox would wish there were public rewards appointed for such assassins and murderers of tyrants, which there are for such as kill wolves.* In a degree of greater or less fanaticism, the same spirit has distinguished the morality of their descendants to our time, for without appealing to the avowed doctrine of Sismondi, a later chief, their recent trophies, won with the tears and blood of Catholic nations, sufficiently demonstrate that they would not have esteemed Tiberius Gracchus to have been happier than his son, the former having studied to preserve the republic, the latter to overthrow it; and, perhaps, it would not be difficult, from marking the course and issue of their measures, to throw some light upon that passage in which Plato affirms, that the unjust man is more prosperous, more powerful, more liberal, and more commanding than the just—*οὐτως ισχυρότερον καὶ ἐλευθεριώτερον καὶ δεσποτικώτερον ἀδικία δικαιοσύνης ἔστιν, ἡκαυτὸς γυγνομήν*.† I make no mention of some modern principles of political economy, which strike at the roots of the morality of the Catholic state, because in the judgment of all just men they should be put down, as Cicero says, not by any philosopher, but by a censor: "non est enim vitium in oratione solum, sed etiam in moribus." In general, we may remark, that in the inferior authors as well as actors of the middle and early ages, the foundation is always sound and incontrovertible, though they sometimes raise upon it, according to their fancy or habits, structures which seem at least to us wild and extravagant. With the moderns, on the contrary, it is the foundation which is unsound and untenable, though by the force of nature, and the arts of a specious civilization, they may be able to form systems that have a semblance of propriety and worth. But leaving the subject of legislative and political justice, we are told to look around us in the modern society, and to observe what a progress general morality has made, and how few men can be found who, in their respective stations, are not worthy and honourable. I believe

* Plat. Crito.

† S. Ambros. Serm. LXXXV.

* Jerusalem and Babel.

† De Repub. Lib. I.

it may seem so—nothing is more probable: “*nisi enim ex comparatione virtutum*,” as St. Jerome says, “*vitium non ostenditur*.”* but out of the pale of Catholicism we have only natural virtues, or else an exaggerated and irregular imitation of higher—the spirit of the duties exercised by the confraternities of the middle age being absolutely unknown; so that, although the Catholic discipline, in the estimation of the moderns, who are said to understand morality so well, was illiberal and constrained, the church continues to sing the words of David, “*narraverunt mihi iniqui fabulationes, sed non ut lex tua*.” The French sophists of our time may claim Callicles as having been of their party, for in speaking to Socrates on one occasion, he adopts all their favourite opinions, and even uses their very words. “How facetious you are,” he says, “O Socrates, to call stupid men temperate. I affirm boldly, that whoever knows how to live well ought to give the rein to his desires, and not to curb them, and to give them whatever they demand; and it is because many are unable to do this that they calumniate those who act thus, and call them intemperate; and thus they enslave men of the best natures, and praise temperance and justice, through their own want of manliness. But, O Socrates, the truth is, that luxury, intemperance, and liberty, when there are means, give power and happiness, and these specious inventions, contrary to nature, are the ravings of men, only to be despised.”†

In all the minute details of life one can perceive the same contrast. The colloquial language of the people in Catholic countries, was not gross like that of Shakspeare’s “liberal shepherds,”‡ as local histories and the details of popular festivities in the middle ages can bear witness. During the extravagant feast of the *Loup-vert* which was celebrated every year by the peasants of Jumieges, it was expressly enacted that at the supper if any one should utter an immodest word he was to pay a fine.§ The laws of the Visigoths were so contrary to the modern ideas of a prudent police, that according to them all who furnished means to transgress the law of God were to be punished with three hundred lashes, and then to be banished the city.|| Such a measure would not be in harmony with the state of modern society, where after all the

useful knowledge furnished, men who “take life’s rule from passion, craved for passion’s sake,” are more intemperate in their blood than those pampered animals that rage in savage sensuality! St. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of persons enslaved by pleasure, wishing to disbelieve, who laugh at truths worthy of all veneration, and introduce barbarism into education.* Might not one suppose on reading these words that the Christian father, with prophetic eye, had seen the disciples of the modern school who, as travellers, artists, speculators and liberators, are now circulating like a secret and mortal venom through all the veins of the political state of Europe? under whose cursed tread every thing innocent and holy withers!—every thing vile and deadly springs up as if called into being by a magician’s wand, wherever they rest? The stones of the sanctuary are dispersed; the corruption of cities opens its tent in the desert. O bitter and humiliating reflection, to think that we should have lived to see a swarm like this taking possession of those Catholic heroic states which had resisted and rejected so long the prolific seeds. To think that such a race, legitimate offspring of the reform preachers by whom they are strengthened in their own esteem, should now be armed by authority, and sent as to a banquet to fight against the churches, gulled and spurred on by the usurers of the two cities which thrive by the blood of all the truly great and all the innocent, careless how many wretches die, provided their speculations may not fail! But so it is, and the just reduced to silence are only looking around in vain for another Theseus to deliver humanity from creatures like the centaurs of old, that seem half man and half beast! One point at all events is fixed under all phases of the modern civilization, for it forms disciples of whom we may affirm with truth, that they are men of no angelic feeling. Their standard is avowedly sensual, only a modified naturalism. Many of their classic productions are even obnoxious to the censure passed by Cicero upon those philosophers who speak of limiting concupiscence, “*An potest cupiditas finiri?*” he indignantly demands. “*Tollenda est atque extrahenda radicitus. Qualis ista philosophia est, quæ non interitum adferat pravitati, sed sit contenta mediocritate vitiorum?*”† We read of our Saviour, when he was in the wilderness, that the devil left

* Hom. Lib. I. com. in 9 Matt.

† Plato Gorgias.

‡ Hamlet, IV. 7.

§ Deshayes’ Hist. de l’Abbaye de Jumieges, 261.

|| Legis Visigothorum, Lib. III. tit. IV. 3.

* Stromat. Lib. I. c. 3.

† De Finibus, II. 9.

him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him. "A great change," observes a modern writer, "in a little time." Such is the case of every solitary soul. A musing mind will not stand neuter a minute, but presently side with legions of good or bad thoughts, and what is true in the case of an individual mind, is no less so with regard to society at large. The spiritual combat so familiar to ages of faith, has been superseded in the imagination by a temporary calm, treacherous and ominous indeed, but most profound. The man who is now designated as possessed of enlightened views and of sound morality, when he contemplates himself, like him of whom we read in the Gospel on returning home, findeth his house swept and garnished, for through neglect of conscience and attention to vain superfluous and extrinsic things, he sees nothing defective there. While Luther was in his cloister, he suffered internal agitation and diverse temptations; when he gave the rein to his passions and became an apostate, he felt them no more. The Catholic philosophy taught that there were domestic enemies against which all Christians were to resist and to contend unceasingly. In breasts to which the ancient discipline is a stranger, these are unknown. "I am not surprised," says Bossuet, "if living as these men live they do not feel the eternal war of concupiscence. When you swim with the stream of a river, nothing is more gentle, but when you turn against it you will discover the rapidity of its motion. So it is with those who never try to rise above nature, or to begin the interior life. They feel not the resistance of concupiscence; they are borne along with it, they proceed at an equal pace, and therefore its impetuosity is imperceptible to them." You have the same remark conveyed in the old verses of Glaber Rodolphus:

"Hoc habet infelix peccandi consuetudo.
Quod plus quis peccat, minus hic peccare per-
rescat,
Quique minus peccat, magis hic peccare times-
cat."

Witness the experience of a St. Paul, whose affections are with Jesus Christ. Who would have supposed in a soul raised to the intelligence of the secret words which it is not lawful for a man to utter, that the war of the inclinations of sense should be still in action? But the apostle himself speaks of it. He descends from the chaste and lofty visions of the third heaven to show himself in the arena of carnal combatants!

How came the apostles, who had left every thing, to exclaim, who then can be saved? "Because," replies Clemens Alexandrinus, "they discerned the depth of the obscure parabolic words, and they were discouraged at the thought of the passions which they had not thoroughly given up, for salvation is of the pure and unimpassioned soul."* "If any one contentious should ask, then," he continues, "how is it possible for the weak flesh to resist these powers, let him know that trusting in our omnipotent conqueror the Lord, we wage war against the princes of darkness and death."† The spiritual combat and the personification of the evil principle, form the grand features in the psychological history of the middle ages. The belief had its origin in the sacred Scriptures, and in the personal experience and observation of thoughtful and profound minds. The grotesque forms attached to the idea of the dæmon, may perhaps, as Michelet suggests, be traced to the lingering traditions of the conquered religions of the Fins and Scandinavians, though the bestial character comprised in it as exhibited in the visions of Dante, conformable to the general opinion of the middle ages, cannot admit of that explanation, for it has, beyond all doubt, its foundation in the secret realities of nature.

The spiritual victory over the material and immaterial evil in the minds of Catholics, was the highest glory that could be attained by man. The state of grace was a paradise in which was beheld the river of living water, resplendent as chrystal, proceeding from the seat of God and of the Lamb; while on the other hand, that of mortal sin was the gloomy region filled with demoniac forms and torments multitudinous. In the poem of the Martyrs, where Eudoxe and Velleda yield to the dæmon, "hell gives the signal of this fatal marriage: the spirits of darkness howl in the abyss—the chaste spouses of the patriarchs turn away their faces, and the protecting angel, veiling himself with his wings, mounts again to heaven." The modern philosophy has pronounced all this to be characteristic of a false and fanciful system of morality. The dæmon disappears from all action of human life, or instead of the dark cherub, the subtle and bestial fiend, he is represented as in Goethe, interesting and sentimental; or as in Milton, he excites pity and admiration, being synonymous with religion

* Lib. Quis Dives Salvetur, I.

† Stromat. Lib. IV. c. 7.

conquered, or as in Klopstock, he is shown repentant and the most interesting personage of the poem. As the principle of individuality in the will opposed to the designs of the Creator, he is wholly excluded, as is also the whole belief in the inherent evil which is of concupiscence. Rationalism, in which so many religious systems began and terminated, understands the mysteries of life in a different sense: it makes the path smooth by pronouncing the contest to be vain, and victory impossible, and so converts man from being a brother in arms of the angels, to become a sensual and unresisting, and unhallowed creature of the earth. No, among men interiorly philosophic, there can be no question here. The history of the pseudo-reform in regard to its influence on morals or metaphysics, on political science, or on domestic action, may be comprised in two lines. "*Homo cum in honore esset non intellexit, comparatus est iumentis insipientibus et similis factus est illis.*"*

Here, in regard to those who have resisted this revolution, a painful and an alarming reflection suggests itself. In Catholic states however disorganised, one may live amidst men of holy simplicity, and as it were, of the old Homeric type transfigured on the mount, resembling those of whom one reads in ancient hallowed books, men of whom nearly every action and word might furnish fresh matter for some new sweet inspiring page, enough to win all hearts to a love of innocence and truth. One may imagine that one's lot has been cast in the happiest and even most romantic age of the world, in the same manner as when one visits the beautiful countries of the south, one can suppose oneself placed in some of those delicious landscapes which the pencil of Claude Lorraine has made so familiar to the fancy; whereas if one pass into countries where the influence of faith and of all the old historic and domestic associations connected with it is limited to a very few, every thing changes, as when you turn your eyes from one of these paintings to let them wander over a vulgar and ignoble scene, and feel the heart sink on being drawn back to reality. Now it is difficult to follow the Catholic type of moral beauty in a country where it has been supplanted by another; for besides that in such lands there is sure to be far greater external temptation, the force of that false opinion which prevails, must, like those calumnies of men from

which the Psalmist prayed to be delivered, prevent many in their course, and lead many from the narrow but tranquil way. You inhale the spirit of the multitude around you. It encompasses you as an atmosphere, and enters into your very soul. Cicero, speaking of the obstacles opposed to the virtue of Roman commanders in the distant provinces of Asia, remarks, "that it is difficult for them to think of nothing but virtue, and that those also who are more moderate, possessing shame and temperance, are nevertheless thought to be so by no one on account of the multitude of the greedy."† So it may be in relation to Catholic manners: where no one understands their type, where no one can recognise it or appreciate it, those few who attempt to follow it are sure to be accused of being unlike the good and fair, of being illiberal and fond of singularity, the force of which misrepresentations is certainly not calculated to smooth the ascent or facilitate the path which must be trod by those who hunger and thirst after living justice. But to return to what concerns the present argument. Another remark suggested by viewing the two disciples in contrast, must be that even independent of what is required by the supernatural principles of the Catholic morality, the language of the moderns is more soft and delicate than the force and gravity of virtue would sanction. Who could doubt from which of the two camps had come that Geoffroy Ville Hardouin, the historian, offering the reality of that chivalry of which we have so many ideal portraits—a warrior impelled only by a sense of the most sacred duty, a wise counsellor, full of prudence, faith, and justice, firm and as unbending as the iron armour which cased his limbs? or what difficulty in determining to what senate those grave patricians belonged who are described by the historians of Venice? Whereas, on the other hand, how prepared is every one to hear the objections of the heretics advanced by those characters which Shakspeare's pen describes, in whom manhood is melted into mincing phrases and gesticulations of fashion? how naturally do they seem to come from a man who is in all the world's new fashion planted, that hath a mint of phrases in his brain, and whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony; who, like Paris, is fair perhaps in form and comely,

"ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι βίη φρεσὶν οὐδέ τις ἀλκή."†

* Pa. xlviii.

† Pro lege Manilia, 22.

† Il. III. 45.

Now, if we look to the picture on the opposite side, we are not reduced to defend the justice and morality of Catholics on the ground taken by those German writers who say that there are different standards, different types as it were of virtue in different ages, and all equally good. "There is a different measure," says Voigt, "for every age, for every nation, for every individual. As all blossoms and plants are not the same, so may humanity bear different forms of good, and what would be hateful in us might have been virtuous in our ancestors."* To such reasoning I would only reply in the words of Cicero, "This is truly a correction and emendation of the ancient philosophy which can have no admittance within the city, the forum, or the courts."

There is no vice so simple, but assumes some mark of virtue on its outward parts. "Quale autem beneficium est," says Cicero to Antony, "quod te abstineris nefario scelere?"† The moderns seem to think that the overt act is required to constitute a transgression of the law of God, and they would hold Cicero's language where he speaks of the size and gladiatorial strength of Antony having added to the shame of his drunkenness, as proving that he might have drank so much without having been drunk.‡ The heroic, just, and devout men of the middle ages were not like the Camilleuses and Themistocles of heathen, and the Becons and Sidneys of modern times, leaving an imperishable fame as the first men of their age and the ornaments of their country, though convicted of such offences that their warmest eulogizers can only say of them what Niebuhr observes of Cæmillus: "In such a man the nation ought to have shown indulgence even to deplorable faults."§ Tacitus speaking of Agricola says, "that it would be an insult to the virtues of such a man to make mention of his integrity and abstinence," but no observant or judicious reader would quarrel with a writer of modern biography for having condescended to enter upon such details respecting the men whom he undertook to describe. Indeed, the followers of the reformed discipline spoke of their heroes as the ancients did of Cato, of whom Cæsar said, that when discovered drunk, those who beheld him seemed rather detected by Cato than Cato was by them; which makes Pliny observe in the style of Burnet, "Potuitne plus auctoritatis tribui Catoni quam si ebruius quoque tam venera-

bilis erat?"* In general their language respecting their Franc von Sickingens, was like that of Cassius, "in such a time as this it is not meet that every nice offence should bear its comment." Accordingly, Elizabeth, that daughter of blood, who made such slaughter of the saints, and such a jest of humanity, murdering her own guest, was saluted as an immaculate heroine, and enshrined in the hearts of all who followed the new banners, which made honourable all who followed them.

Gustavus Adolphus, who pillaged and desecrated all the churches of Germany, and ravaged ten great provinces in honour of Luther, is a name never uttered in countries where the modern discipline is established, without exultation and defiance. Who more dear and venerable in the estimation of his party than the famous admiral Coligny, who was strongly suspected of having armed the hand of Poltrot to assassinate that noble hero the duke of Guise, and who admitted that for five or six months he had heard of such a plan, and that "he had strongly contested the point with them?" who confessed that Poltrot had said to him, how easy it would be to kill the duke, but that sooth he had never "insisted upon his doing so:" who admitted that he had given Poltrot a horse; that when Poltrot had disclosed his idea he had replied nothing "to say whether it was well or ill done," and who declares in a letter to the queen that the death of the duke was the greatest good that could happen to the kingdom, to the church of God, and personally to the king, and to all the house of Coligny.† The moderns again seem to regard indulgence in any one sin as a warrant of greater virtue in other respects, as passionate persons are said to be generous. But the Catholic moral writers hold a different doctrine, and sooth, "What boots it at one gate to make defence, and at another to let in the foe effeminately vanquished?" Even the Gentile sage showed that every evil was to be fled from by virtue and not by the contrary evil, "as some think," he says, "who correct bashfulness by insolence, rusticity by profaneness, cowardice and effeminacy by a tone of boldness and audacity, and superstition by atheism."‡

The just men of Catholic times, even when described by writers of the modern school, are not represented as persons in

* Geschichte Preussens, V. 394. + Philip. II.

† Ibid. II.

‡ Hist. of Rome, II. 501.

* Epist. Lib. III. 12.

† St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, Tom. III. 113.

‡ Plutarch.

whom deplorable faults must be forgiven in consideration of their general merits, and as being venerable even when detected in their sins. Those ancient spirits would marvel at seeing such virtue crowned even on earth. An historian knows well that if there hath been men that showed in faithful mirror the celestial justice, these without veil reflected it. Behold that Hermaan von Salza, master of the Teutonic order, of whom we have so often spoken, and hear the testimony borne to his character by Voigt, the historian of Prussia. "Admirable he was in peace and war, attached to freedom, to law, and order, wise in all his counsels, pure from passion, selfishness, and love of dominion, superior to all the suggestions of pride, removed from error of every kind, detached from the world in heart as well as in vow! Humility and obedience marked every action of his life; he was always ready to devote himself for the sake of the poor, the sick, and the unprotected. As a knight and master he was of surpassing virtue, intent always upon what tended to promote the propagation of the faith, the honour of the church and the good of mankind. In his relations with the emperor and the pope he was equally tried and found eminent as one of the noblest and most just of men, eminent in the magnanimity of his soul, in the purity of his life, in the humility of his manners, in the warmth of his devotion. Not one word of censure can history pronounce against him, whether as a knight, a statesman, a Christian, or a man. So he was beloved by his contemporaries, being the admiration of high and low, the ornament of his order, and the object of praise to all succeeding ages."* By the degree of astonishment which we should experience were we to find, after reading this, that his countrymen had to show indulgence to some deplorable faults in his character, or to throw a veil over the actions of his private life, we can estimate the distance between a just man of the Catholic type, and a hero of the school which has been opposed to it as teaching a sounder and more effective morality.

In sacred dyptiques at least posterity will not discover the names of many of these latter transmitted with honour. The impression upon the mind of one familiar with antiquity, with respect to the character of the majority of men, in the times

which succeeded to the ages of faith, is not assuredly that they were of a different religion, or of a more spiritual philosophy from that of the Gentiles, or that they understood morality better than the Catholics of the middle ages, but that they had thrown off all religion, and all moral restraints, excepting such as were imposed by civil laws, by the motives of personal interest, and of temporary expediency. A classical student, who turns his view from the pages which contain the old histories of the heathen world, and its moral views, to the manners of the men who move around him, will be startled by no prodigious contrast, by no novelty. He sees evidence, indeed, that they have forsaken the temples of the gods, but where does he find indication that they have fled to the cross? The persons who surround him are his old acquaintances, described in Euripides and Sallust, in Athenæus perhaps, and Suetonius. "They can fancy themselves," as Heinsius observed, "living in Greece in ancient times, fighting with Homer, though even that may be questioned, rusticating with Hesiod, loving with Anacreon, weeping with Euripides, and with Pindar rising to a poetic heaven."* In the Gentile authors one is often struck with sudden amazement at the breaking forth of expressions which indicate how immeasurable is the distance between the sentiments of human morality and those of the Christian law. The Ion of Euripides presents many examples of this kind, as in the lines

——— ἴταν δὲ πολέμιους δρᾶσαι κακῶς
βέλη τις, οὐδεὶς ἐμποδὼν κείται νόμος.†

But what is most remarkable, is the conduct of Ion; for after being prepared to consider him almost as one of our Christian acolythes, how very startling is the manner in which he expresses himself, on discovering the plot against his life. This gentle and holy youth is now full of revenge, and blasphemous imprecations against the very gods whom he had before adored. With rapture he cries out to Creusa:

ἀλλ' οὐτε βωμός, οὐτ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμος,
σώσει σ'.‡

Then he condemns heaven, and pretends to be wiser and juster.

* Voigt Geschichte Preussens, II. 365.

* Heinsius Orat. XIX. + 1060. ‡ 1288.

φεῦ!

δεινὸν γὰρ, θνητοῖς τοὺς νόμους ὡς οὐ καλῶς
ἔθικεν ὁ θεός, οὐδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης σοφῆς.

Τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀδίκους βωμὸν οὐχ ἵκειν ἐχρήν,
ἀλλ' ἐξελαύνειν*.

And when the priestess remonstrates with him, he justifies his own projects of having complete satisfaction; demanding

Οὐ χρὴ με τοὺς κτείνοντας ἀνταπολλύναι:†

The minister of heaven can give him no higher law. She speaks of purity; and he replies, every one is pure who kills his enemy: concluding with an insolent declaration, that he has been deceived by the god, that he disdains his revelations; and adds, that if on discovering his real mother, she should prove to be some slave, it would be much better for him never to have heard of her. And this is the sacerdotal youth who appeared at first all innocence, and gentleness, and sanctity! Assuredly, most striking are such passages, and most convincing is the evidence which they furnish, as to the fact of there being on earth a new created man. But of this evidence the Gentile authors are not the only source, for in the writings of the moderns we are liable to meet with similar interruptions to the current of a discourse which had professed to spring from the supernatural fountain of divine faith. Read that letter from Sir Philip Sidney to Molineux, his father's secretary, declaring that he suspects him of having communicated to other persons the letters which he had intended for his father's ear alone, and concluding with these words: "I assure you before God, that if ever I know you do so much as read any letter I write to my father without his commandment or my consent, I will thrust my dagger into you. And trust to it, for I speak it in earnest; in the mean time, farewell." The author to whom we are indebted for a beautiful edition of Sir Philip Sidney's works, acknowledges that this epistle is sadly deficient in point of discretion and temper; "but," he adds, "as showing the intensity of his filial regard, it must lead to our increased love and respect for the amiable qualities of his heart." That Sir Philip Sidney possessed the highest virtue of a natural order, and that his character corresponded with the fairest ideal of the discipline to which he was attached, may

be very true, but assuredly, to one familiar with the tradition of Catholic manners, there was somewhat to astonish in such a letter, coming from a man who separated himself from the ancient society, on the alleged ground of its not being according to Scripture and the Evangelic law. Now mark a contrast in regard to the duties of a particular state. We have often read of the retreats for prayer and spiritual meditation, practised at regular intervals by Catholic bishops, who had been obliged to take a part in civil affairs for the interest of kings and people; but what is the provision made by that illustrious historian, and model of the modern discipline, the bishop Burnet, when placed in similar circumstances? "Upon this," he says, "I went into a closer retirement, and to keep my mind from running after news and affairs, I set myself to the study of philosophy and algebra;" expedient worthy, no doubt, of an Aristotle or an Archimedes, but rather singular when selected by one who professed to be a successor of the Apostles, and a restorer of Scripture, and a sound morality to the Church. It is painful to be obliged to include the glorious name of Milton in the list of those whose works can supply contrasts of this extraordinary and afflicting nature? How does he speak, albeit with the name of God, and the church, and reformation, ever on his tongue? Read his defences of the people of England. With what fury and virulence does he attack his opponents: with what inconceivable frivolity does he describe the beauty of his person, setting forth among his other bodily accomplishments, his skill and practice in handling his sword. "Armed," saith he, "with this weapon, as I commonly was, I thought myself a match for any man, though far my superior in strength, and secure from any insult which one man could offer to another. At this day I have the same spirit; my eyes only are not the same."* Let nature have her due praise, as she hath always her reward. All this may be amiable and admirable; but does it indicate a better understanding of morals in the Christian sense, for that is the present question, or is it consistent with the character of religious reformers, for that again is a question that forcibly suggests itself? Is it not calculated to awaken many suspicions, and to justify the inference, that the real cause of opposition to

* 1325.

† 1342.

• Second Defence of the People of England.

the Catholic church was something very different from a true progress in moral philosophy, and a light infused by the author of the Holy Scriptures? But without going back to past times, is it not evident that the moral views of the very men who affirm that morality is now better understood than in the middle ages, are obnoxious to the charge of inconsistency? A Catholic, on reading the poem of *Marmion*, must be startled when he hears Constance de Beverley, for whom preceding verses had awakened a lively interest, suddenly exclaiming:

"But did my fate and wish agree
Ne'er had been read, in story old,
Of maiden true betray'd for gold,
That loved or was avenged like me."*

Another of these sudden inconsistent transitions occurs in the *Lady of the Lake*, where the death words of *Blanche to Fitz-James* are given, invoking him by his knighthood's honoured sign, and for his life's sake, which she had preserved, to avenge her. The hour of death has restored her reason; you expect to hear the last sighs and wishes of a Christian soul. And what are the words—

"Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor *Blanche* of *Devon's* wrong!"

The heroic spirit which we have noticed as characteristic of the Catholic justice, might again be viewed here in opposition to the kind of shop-counter morality, which is so predominant in the modern literature, philosophy, and manners. This kind undoubtedly was not so well understood in the middle ages, by those at least with whom history is concerned; for, in fact, men were often really deficient in respect to it, so as even to feel a foolish pride in saying with *Armado*, "I am ill at reckoning; it fitteth the spirit of a tapster." Here a grand reform was made by the disciples of the new discipline, whose perfect understanding, within this sphere, may be collected from a few examples. *Paulus*, a professor of the new theology, objects to the miracle of our Lord respecting the tribute money, by observing, that "at *Capernaum*, where he had friends, a miracle for about a dollar would certainly have been superfluous." When *Luther* would express his horror of the sentiments of *Erasmus*, he can find no stronger terms to indicate

* *Marmion*, II.

it than by saying, that he would not for 10,000 florins be in his place. *Burnet*, too, in enumerating the excellent virtues of one renowned hero of his party, mentions that he would never attempt to pass off bad money, which he knew to be such. All the enlightened men, who follow these leaders, would resent as an injury the intimation that they had no regard for very elevated sentiments; but, the fact is, that when left to themselves, and observed off their guard, in the assembly of their peers, in their political writings as well as in the common occasions of life, they never, by any hazard, allude to the profession or exercise of heroic virtue, unless in the way of ridicule or of objection. They declare that it is beyond all power of human credulity to believe, that public men would support or oppose a state measure unless they received an equivalent for their doing so. They proclaim, that the only safeguard for the justice of men is publicity, and that no one can be trusted whose actions are not constantly submitted to the scrutiny of the world. Expediency is their avowed and exclusive motive, even when they do an eminent act of justice; and what can be expected from them when they are required to perform an act of sacrifice? They ascribe no value to any thing but what is attached to the material and temporal order. As *De Haller* says of the revolutionary sophists, who are opposed to all authority, spiritual and temporal, extending their false ideas to every thing, they distort and paralyze the best measures; they have always objections to advance against what is good, and excuses ready for evil. To their eyes the moment for the first is never come; but there is always urgent necessity for the latter. In short, however unwilling one may be to arrive at a conclusion which seems like accusing a set of men in mass, there is no other inference possible, after an attentive observation of what has occurred in later times, but that nothing carries with it, in the estimation of those who are true disciples of the modern discipline, the character of solidity, of practical, sober, enlightened, and dispassionate wisdom, excepting what is in its last terms, a sordid and despicable life, without genius, and without virtue.

The very confessions, too, of the men who accomplished and favoured the revolution of the sixteenth century, and who stood high in the estimation of its admirers, are worthy of being remarked.

The bitter hate which pervaded the mind of Calvin, is ascribed by some to the sufferings of his youth, when he lived as preceptor in a proud family, which made him feel his inferiority. After all my efforts," he says, "I cannot tame my own ferocity." Sir Philip Sidney, indeed, takes an opportunity most pointedly to deny the charge brought against himself, that he was wholly possessed by egotism and bubbling pride; but he pleads guilty of a headlong ambition, that made him 'oft his best friends overpass.'* "I perceive my soul," says Fuller, "deeply guilty of envy. By my good will, I would have none prophesy but mine own Moses. I had rather the Lord's work were undone, than done better by another than by myself."† These men, who accused the Catholic society of the middle ages of having been left in ignorance of the Bible, gave no proof of having rendered their own manners, or those of the disciples who followed them, conformable to its spirit. The names and phrases of the Old Testament were indeed ever on their tongue; but did they learn from it to evince the meekness of Moses, the simplicity of Joseph, the gentleness of David, the fervour of Elias, the abstinence of Daniel, the chastity of Samuel? It might be doubted, whether amidst the general advance, as they supposed, of knowledge, when even the Bible, as Novalis suggests, was to be considered as progressive, they had learned to understand so much as to know with what virtues these names of holy writ ought to be associated; though that knowledge would have been more satisfactory proof of morality being well understood, than the writing up "Bethel" and "Zion" over their halls of assembly, and calling their children Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago. They adopted a different division of the decalogue, although they might have known that St. Clemens of Alexandria, so profoundly versed in ancient erudition, when philosophizing upon the two tables, and showing their mystic principle, divides them as did the Catholic church, in their days;‡ but the question was still urgent, were they the first to enable men to fulfil it in spirit and in justice? Truly it is only one who has followed the history of the religious innovators, and marked their manners from

their first appearance as a society, that can understand the Apostle, who, after describing men "lovers of themselves, greedy, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, unchaste, cruel, without benignity, betrayers, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," adds—"habentes speciem quidem pietatis."* As for those more avowedly in alliance with the world, their history is not more inviting. "The monster of modern sophistry," says the poet Gilbert, "has not a ferocious air, and the name of virtue is always on its tongue; but what age was ever more fertile in vice, more sterile in noble deeds, than this which is termed the age of reason, when men are taught by moral authors, that for the philosopher there is no God?"† No. These pretensions are vain, and the men who produce them have given no proof of having reformed or perfected either the philosophy or the practice of morals. The ancient Christian civilization was indeed disturbed by the common vices of our nature, and embittered by the usual miseries that wait on the present probationary state of man; but, on the other hand, it is impossible to survey it without discovering the existence of certain high peculiar virtues in the morality which formed it, of the most admirable adaptation to all our wants, and in strictest conformity to our noblest and purest conceptions of perfection—virtues such as had never been seen, or to the same degree developed under any other form of human society, and which constitute evidently a link in the chain of universal order. Nay, traverse in every direction, if you will, the vast empires that have lost unity—no where will you ever find these peculiar and inalienable titles, which raise the Catholic morality above all that the human intelligence of itself had ever taught, or the human unassisted nature ever practised; graces independent of individuality of temper or genius, of national character, or local influence, which defy all attempts to praise them worthily, or even to define them with precision, separated by a slender, hardly traceable, but wholly impassable line, from all human virtue;—graces, than which nothing is found sweeter, nothing stronger, like the dew of heaven, while descending in separate drops, following a universal

* The life of S. P. Sidney.

† Thoughts XII.

‡ Stromat. Lib. VI. c. 16.

* 2 ad Tim. iii.

† Gilbert le XVIII. Siècle.

and invariable law, so as to be perfectly the same in each, dispensing equal benediction over the whole face of nature;—graces, which the eyes of humanity are never quite prepared to witness, which, after having been practised nearly two thousand years, seem still in each contemporary act a divine novelty,—before which, astonished sufferers, and those who dread

impending wrath, are often constrained, as we have seen in the late afflictions, to renounce all their fondest prejudices, and to fall upon their knees in a rapture of grateful admiration;—gifts that almost render the person of man angelic, godlike, which the just of the middle ages all received, and which, in the Catholic church, will be found for ever.

CHAPTER X.



FROM a view of historical facts and characters during the middle ages, an attentive observer will have perceived that there were still many peculiar features of great importance in the system of Catholic morals, besides those which we have already examined. These it must be our object in the remaining pages of this sixth book to investigate and explain. The difficulties which encompass persons without the sphere of unity in their first deliberations respecting the importance of returning to it, cannot be a subject of surprise when we bear in mind that the question then before them is one which must affect them in the most susceptible and intimate part, since it is one not alone of speculation and abstract philosophy, but much more of practical life and manners—a serious deliberation truly, to use the words of Plato, *οὐ γὰρ περὶ τοῦ ἐπιτυχόντος ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ὄντινα τρόπον χρὴ ζῆν*.* In fact, where men had not been formed to the manners of the Catholic type, there was something far more difficult to overcome than any opinion before they could become living members of the universal Christian society. It was not merely principles and doctrines in that case that were to be changed. The men were to be changed: their souls, by means of new acts, and voluntary thoughts were to be put in a new psychological condition; things were to be brought out by the associating principle in new intellec-

tual combinations. St. Ambrose remarks the connection between belief and manners, saying, "*ubi cœperit quis luxuriari, incipit deviare a fide vera*."* Before a comparison had been instituted between the moral philosophy of the ages of faith and that of latter times, it would have been well for many writers if they had studied the former in other sources besides the writings of the licentious satirists, and the annals of Scotch and English wars. If the work of Richard of St. Victor, *De exterminatione mali et promotione boni*, or his book *de statu interioris hominis*, or Abelard's treatise on morals, "*know thyself*;" had been examined, or if men had only read the twelve rules of John Picus of Mirandula, entitled *Regulæ Dirigentes*, or the letter which St. Francis addressed to all the Christians, religious, clergy, laics, men and women, who dwell in the universal world, greeting them with peace from heaven and charity in the Lord,† I am willing to believe that we should never have been told by respectable writers that morality was now better understood.

"To form a good system of ethics it is required, first that it be precise, not to give place to the illusions of self-love; secondly, certain, to bind firmly the liberty of man, who would not be subject to an uncertain law; thirdly, predominant in the ideas of man, in order to overcome his passions; fourthly, efficacious, administering an internal force to the assistance of reason, to sustain man in the practice

* Plato de Repub. Lib. I.

* Epist. Lib. VI. 36.

† Wadding Ann. Minor. an. 1213.

of his duty." "All these qualities," concludes Spedalieri, "belong to the Catholic religion, and to no other."* The consequence of the modern principle of private judgment, which reduced the Christian religion to the rank of human religion, and from being a deposit of faith to be the sport of men's fancies, was that there arose as many opinions concerning it as there were heads, *nec circa credenda tantum, sed circa agenda quoque*; for it is a fact of history and of experience, that there were not wanting persons who sought to justify from the Holy Scriptures, theft, adultery, and murder. It will be in vain to talk of appealing to extreme instances, and of drawing undue inferences from them when we have the histories of Germany, Switzerland and Scotland, furnishing a concurrent testimony to the truth of this assertion. A custom prevailed in the canton of Berne, associated with the first communion, which it is impossible to describe in these pages, and which, as the count of Stolberg before his conversion remarked, could only be elsewhere sought for among the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands.† Endeavouring, therefore, that at least the rule of manners might be preserved from wreck, other men, laying aside the interpretation of the sacred books, applied themselves to the study of what was termed the law of nature, founded on the authority of human reason; supposing that they who differed concerning revelation might be made to agree upon moral doctrines. Hence a custom prevailed of teaching a moral discipline without any reference to religion, and of submitting all duties to the tribunal of human reason: which gave birth to innumerable treatises on moral philosophy and the law of nature, in which Christian motives were laid aside, and the office of instruction was ascribed to philosophy, as in the heathen books‡. Accordingly so similar was the result, that the words of Cicero might be taken into any narrative of recent times, and pass for a true delineation of them. "Other precepts have now succeeded to these," says the philosopher, "therefore some hold, that wise men should do all things for the sake of pleasure; for even from this turpitude of speech, learned men have not fled. Others think that dignity is to be joined with pleasure, that

things greatly at variance with each other may be conjoined by the faculty of language. They who approve of that one direct course to praise with labour, are now left almost alone in the schools. *Prope jam soli in scholis sunt relict.* This way, therefore, is now left desert and uncultivated, and already it is grown over with leaves and boughs."* A wondrous thing indeed it was, and most worthy of the attention of men truly wise, that whilst all people every where who had been trained according to the traditions and discipline of the Catholic church, possessed sure principles of justice and virtue, so that the rudest minds, although unable to give accurate definitions, nevertheless knew perfectly what was good, what was evil, what was agreeable to nature, what repugnant; in a word, all duties and all principles, and were able to exercise a right judgment respecting all the offices of life, the men who wished to be called wise, and the reformers of the church and of philosophy, were still disputing in schools respecting good and evil, and the foundations of a happy life, the origin of laws and duties, the principles of government and of society, and with such violence and diversity of sentiment, that after so many ages of disputation they were unable to agree in any definition; there being some found even to palliate if not to approve of sins that Gentiles in their parables condemn to their abyss and horrid pains; so that there was more judgment among the ignorant and rustic multitude, among boys and women than among bearded philosophers; more in the workshops of artisans than in the lyceums of learned men; and no kind, no condition or sex were so wanting in moral truth as those philosophic inquirers, whose only employment was the investigation of truth; the words of Cicero being still applicable to philosophers, "*quanto melius hæc vulgus imperitorum.*" The moderns seem to think, that in the judgment of morals as of poetry,† there is nothing which gives pleasure or indignation, but what is mutable; nothing in the principles of human society, or in the rule of human duties, fixed and eternal. The arrival of each new sophist is therefore hailed as the harbinger of some fresh light, which is to dispel the clouds and uncertainty in which their moral philosophy may be still in-

* Spedalieri de diritti dell' uomo IV.

† Reise in Der Schweiz, 20 B.

‡ Ventura de Methodo Philosophandi, cap. 3. art. 5.

* Pro M. Cælio, 17.

† Hor. Epist. II. 1.

volved. Let the system of this stranger be ever so extravagant and absurd, still if it only seem to be new, and above all if it hath been condemned by the Holy See, there are instantly found ingenious and eloquent men to advocate it, and to encourage the author.

"Undique visendi studio Trojana juvenus
Circumfusa ruit, certantque illudere capto."

In general on these occasions they are divided between the advice of the rash Thymoetes and the prudent Capys,

"Scinditur incertum studia contraria vulgus."

Is the novelty to be admitted or not? becomes the question with a Christian people, who were to have been established and rooted in the faith once transmitted, and persevering unto the end in the doctrine of the apostles. The men of Catholic ages knew that there is an eternal law, as St. Thomas remarked, not from there having been from eternity those who might be subject to it, since God alone is from eternity, but because things which exist not in themselves exist in God, inasmuch as they are foreknown and pre-ordained by him.* The Catholic had his eyes always fixed upon what is arranged according to perfect and eternal order, and therefore it was he who attained to that condition described by Plato, for in consequence of having such an object he neither committed nor suffered injustice, since when he suffered, he only suffered what providence permitted, and moved always conformably to reason and to order.† St. Augustin speaks in no measured terms of an opinion which would now be designated as liberal, and says, that "some being moved by the variety of innumerable customs, sleeping men as it were, who have never risen from the sleep of folly, nor awakened to the light of wisdom, think that there is no justice in itself, but that the custom of each country constitutes justice, which must therefore vary." "They do not perceive," he adds, "that the rule of not doing to others what you do not wish they should do to you, can never vary, which sentence when referred to the love of God is the destruction of all crimes."‡

During the middle ages, the Catholic

rule of manners emanating to the people from the church, obviated the danger of uncertainty or variation in the fulfilment of human duties. "Ecclesia Dei ea quæ sunt contra fidem vel bonam vitam non approbat, nec tacet." This is what St. Augustin says. "The church," as Melchior Canus observed, "could not err in delivering precepts of manners, which are necessary to salvation, and common to the whole church." Indeed the infallibility of her decisions in matters of faith, necessarily involved certainty in respect to the rule of manners; for from the former men know accurately where to place the chief good and the chief evil, and as Cicero says, "where this is once found, the way of life is found;" *inventa vitæ via est conformatioque omnium officiorum*.* If the rule of faith be left depending on the private judgment of individuals, the way of manners, independent of Catholic traditions, and the influence of the Catholic church, will become like the way of darkness described by Æschylus:

— δυσοδοπαίπαλα
δερκομένοισι καὶ δυσομμάτοις ὁμῶς.†

Moreover men were not reduced to the necessity of drawing the practical inference for themselves from the principles of faith, however clear and easy might be the deduction. The people were to be expressly instructed, as the decrees of Ives de Chartres say, in all their essential duties to God, their neighbour, and themselves.‡ They were taught what St. Bernard shows in the third book of his considerations, that in all their actions they were to consider three things, first, what was lawful; secondly, what was decorous; and, thirdly, what was expedient to do. They were taught that the Christian life might be described, as Rosmene says, in four words, —to do, to suffer, to be silent, and to pray, —to do the duties of one's state; to suffer willingly the internal and external tribulations that God might send; to be silent on the defects of others; and to pray to God incessantly in labour, in temptation, in the beginning and end of all works. Each man's own heart was to tell him whether he heard the words of God, which were the criterion to determine under what banner he was enrolled: and in order to ascertain that point, as St. Gregory

* 1, 2, 9, 91, Art. I.

† Plato de Repub. Lib. VI.

‡ De Doct. Christ. Lib. III. cap. 14.

• De Finibus, Lib. V.

† Eumenid. 388.

‡ Decret. Pars VI. c. 154.

saith, he had only to ask himself did he desire the celestial country; did he refrain from fleshly lusts; did he decline the glory of the world; did he abstain from coveting what belonged to others, and did he give to others what was his own?"*

Thus the destination of men was perfectly clear to them, so long as they only asked the question what have they to do? though when they wished to know more than that, whether to unriddle the endless destiny in the life of one single man, in the history of humanity, or in the whole course of nature, they were presented with mysteries which will, during the present life, for ever remain hidden to the human intelligence. No Catholic, where points of fact were set at rest, could ever be ignorant of what ought to be done in any of the great questions which agitate nations, any more than in the circumstances affecting his own private and domestic state. Every member of holy church was, as St. Anselm says, like a square stone, which stands equally well on any one of its six sides; for whether in prosperity or in adversity, in freedom or in subjection, in secret or in public, he stood firmly and persisted in his purpose.† What Hubert remarks of the Spaniards, and of all people of the south, that religion, custom, power, in short, the positive, determines many questions, the solution of which belongs generally to the province of romance writers,‡ was strictly true of the Catholic society in every country during the middle ages. Taste, elegance, politeness, sentiment, were all included in the fulfilment of duty.

In later times, abstractions have been substituted for things. Even men who have an exact knowledge of what is right and wrong, of what is allowed, and of what is forbidden, seem unable to recognise the actual circumstances under which they are called upon to put in practice what they have so often theoretically learned, so that in reality their religion is wholly separated from life; it is an embroidered suit, which is hung up in secret closets and never worn, and thus they pass their days amidst repeated occasions of obeying the law of God and of imitating Christ, without having the least idea that an occasion has ever been presented to them of doing so.

Now in the middle ages, religion acted immediately and practically upon life; it was an every day suit. In the fortune-teller, men beheld the person from whose door they were to turn away in shuddering, in the profane assembly the moment when they were not to be ashamed of Christ, in the festival the day set apart from servile work, in the poor beggar the person of their Lord to whom the cup was due, in the cross by the way side, a type of the mystery which saved the world, in the priest the minister of Christ. Hence the harmony between the external order and the piety of the faithful was preserved. It is not that external circumstances are at present wanting, but that the art of recognising them is lost, which is also, one may remark by the way, the art of rendering life poetical; for it is this reducing of religion to abstractions which makes life so monotonous and unpicturesque, so prosaic and material. Men now talk of realities as opposed to the fancies of youth and the tenderness of an unenlightened devotion, without knowing what realities in fact are, though nothing can be easier than to discover this. The Catholic life was a life of poesy and of ideal beauty, for reality is original sin. What is the ideal? In men, the ideal must be either absurd, or else the type which was in God's mind before original sin. Therefore the Catholic life, while in the highest degree poetic, was in the strictest sense a life of duty. Every thing was precise and definite in its course. Do you suppose that a savage and reckless path, like that of so many disciples of a modern poet, is more congenial to the muse? You are in error. Even for the attainment of what most enchants the heart of unsophisticated youth, the Catholic course was more inviting than a wild dedication of itself to unpathed waters, undreamed shores, most certain to miseries enough. But to return, it was one of the greatest characteristics of the Catholic morality, and one of the great advantages of its authority, that it prevented all the sophisms of the passions with a precept or a declaration. Thus, as Manzoni remarks, when it was disputed whether men of a different colour from Europeans ought to be considered as men, the church, pouring on their foreheads the regenerative water, imposed silence for ever upon that discussion.*

* Hom. XVIII. in Evan.

† S. Anselmi de Similitudinibus, cap. 173.

‡ Skizzen aus Spanien, XI.

* Osservazioni sulla Morale Cattolica, 103.

Sismondi says that the church, by forbidding men to speak evil of each other, has prevented them from expressing the just judgment upon virtue and vice, and has put truth to silence. The reply of Manzoni deserves great attention. "Every time," he says, "that a person imagines he has found in the Catholic religion an obstacle to some sentiment, action, or institution, just and useful, generous and tending to social improvement, on examining it well, he will find either that the obstacle does not exist, and that its appearance arose solely from not having sufficiently observed religion, or else that this thing has not the character and the end which it seems to have at the first view. Besides the common illusion which springs from the weakness of our understanding, there is a constant temptation of hypocrisy, from which even the purest minds and most desirous of good are not exempt, of an hypocrisy which associates the idea of a greater good, the idea of a generous inclination with the desires of the predominant passion. If under such influence we condemn the rule of morality, we run the risk of serving some reprobate sentiment, which we do not confess even to ourselves.* On the other hand, from this positive and authoritative nature of the law of manners, it followed that the dangers which attend a thirst for justice were obviated.

It is a common reflection of Catholic moralists, that scruples only proceed from spiritual pride. This profound reflection is a proof among many, of the accuracy and depth which they have employed in the study of the human mind, and in the detection of the intricate windings of the passions. Manzoni observes that this moral malady attests the excellence of religion. The tendency to perfection is so inseparable from it, that it is manifested at length even in the troubles and misery of the man who professes it. A mind devoured by the dread of not being sufficiently just, so as to lose its tranquillity, might have appeared as a prodigy of virtue, if religion herself, so superior to the views of men, had not shown in such a mind dispositions contrary to trust, to humility, and to Christian freedom; if it had not furnished the idea of a virtue from which all disordinate movements are excluded, and which in proportion as it advances to perfection, finds itself nearer to peace and to the highest reason.†

The results of extravagance in morals

were profoundly estimated by the philosophers of the middle age. "Observe," says Richard of St. Victor, "that by how much more imprudently and immoderately any one casts himself down, to so much the more insane and enormous pride does he afterwards give way. Mark in this King Nebuchadnezzar, the inconstant and indiscreet humiliation which is succeeded by more than human pride; for he who first adored Daniel, afterwards set up his own statue to be adored."* "What sort of charity is this," says S. Bonaventura, "by which you will at one time love your neighbour more than yourself and beyond the commandment, and at another so little that, contrary to the commandment, your love for him will be dissolved by favour or fear, disturbed by sadness, contracted by avarice, weakened by ambition, distorted by honours, cooled by envy? 'Noli nimium esse justus.' It is sufficient that you love your neighbour as yourself. 'Implere prius, et sic curato effundere.'"†

The precision of the rule of duties furnished even occasion to many striking scenes, which history does not disdain to record, and gave dignity to acts that would otherwise have seemed too trifling for notice, as when Fructuoso, bishop of Tarragona, going to martyrdom, refused a drink which was offered to him, saying that the hour of breaking the fast was not come.

Again, it should be observed, that the only justice, the only morality recognised by the Catholic discipline, was that which involved all virtues and the fulfilment of all duties, the most common and vulgar as well as the most rare and sublime. "King Edward the Fourth," says the monk of Croyland, "testified the catholicity of his mind at the last; for he made restitution to every man whom he had defrauded or injured by extortion; and no better end could he have made than this, in which he endeavoured to imitate Zacchæus, and with this intention he might have hope, for it is not said that Christ had respect to the works of Zacchæus but to his mind."‡ In like manner, Henry the Second, emperor and third king, made restitution at his death of property which he had seized in his anger, and asked pardon of all whom he had injured.§

* Richard. S. Vict. de Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. I. l. c. 37.

† Meditat. Vitæ Christi, cap. 47.

‡ Hist. Croylandensis in Rer. Anglic. Script. Tom. I. 564.

§ Chronic. Hirsauensis, I.

* 239.

† Id. 292.

Hear how father John de Avila replies to a grandee of Spain who was sick, and who had written to ask his advice. "If you should have gained any thing at play, I wish you would restore it, and if you have encouraged or requested others to play and they have lost, I wish you would restore to them what they lost. You should publish through all the churches of your state, that if any of your servants or officers should have done injury to any one you are anxious to repair it."*

Shakspeare, who draws from life in Catholic society, describes Hamlet's uncle as wanting no instruction here.

"But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—

That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen."

It is a common opinion with modern superficial writers, that the clergy praised indiscriminately all who gave riches to the church, and that by liberality to the clergy men believed themselves dispensed from observing justice in their secular relations; and here we should remark, how totally they are deceived in entertaining it. Not even from the casual observations of those who wrote upon subjects that had not immediate connexion with morals, can they find for it a shadow of ground. Hear how Romuald, archbishop of Salerno, speaks of King William of Sicily. "This king," saith he, "greatly venerated the persons of ecclesiastics, and enriched the clergy with many gifts, and left in his testament large sums to be expended for the safety of his soul. He was a victorious king by sea and land, but hateful to his subjects; more feared than loved; in heaping up money very solicitous, in expending it not sufficiently liberal."†

The Catholic discipline was very strict with regard to those duties which men who affect great intellectual elevation, and particularly those who pretend to reform philosophy, are very apt to overlook. In the laws of the Visigoths, we read that there is no asylum for debtors in a church. The church defends no debtor, but delivers him up, provided he is not to be bound or struck; but in presence of the priest or deacon the time is to be fixed for paying the debt.‡ On the other hand, there was

a heavy penalty by the civil laws against attacking the dead on account of debts, and insulting their funerals.*

When Gonsalvus Sancius, a man of arms at first, was converted to a religious life, he deemed it not enough to clothe him in good St. Francis's girdle, but he distributed all his goods among his creditors; and finding that there was not sufficient to repair the losses which he had occasioned while conducting the armies of Peter, king of Castile, he presented himself, with a cord tied round his neck, to all whom he had injured, and implored their pardon.† René Pazzi, who had shown from the first a horror at the conspiracy of his family, in which he had refused to take part, was nevertheless involved in the ruin which followed its defeat, and barbarously executed. He had always been very bountiful in alms to the poor, and a great benefactor to the churches. On the eve of the day of the fatal enterprize, he had paid all his debts with great exactness, and had returned to the owners all the goods which had been deposited in his warehouse, or at the custom-house under his name, in order that if any misfortune overtook him, no one might receive injury through him.

Those debtor stones, which may be seen at Padua, Verona, Florence, and Sienna, before which a debtor used to be delivered from the pursuit of his creditors, on condition of his swearing, after a humiliating ceremony, that he had not five francs in his possession, indicate that in those times there was less intrepidity in crime and less severity in legislation than in subsequent ages. To these exact principles must be traced that wise and minute economy which was such a characteristic of many of the ancient kings, of which there are such striking instances in the lives of Charlemagne and other heroic Catholic princes. The Abbot Alexander says that Roger, king of Sicily, was never idle for an instant, but when not otherwise employed, he wrote or read documents relative to affairs, for of every thing there was an exact account kept in writing, and he gave nothing with inconsiderate liberality, heeding the common maxim "whoso liveth not according to number, will live to shame."‡ The lesson which Dante learned in Paradise, was taught to each man on earth in Catholic times:

* Gregorius Tholosanus *Præluia Jurisconsulti*, Lib. II.

† Wadding *Annal. Minor. Tom. VIII.*

‡ De Rebus Gest. Rogerii, Lib. IV. c. 3. *Rer. Italic. Script. Tom. V.*

* John de Avila, Part II. Epist. 62.

† *Rer. Italic. Script. Tom. VII.*

‡ *Legis Visigothorum, Lib. IX. tit. III. 4.*

that if evil fruit should follow good intent and strict obedience to the law of justice, all the ill derived from his well doing will not harm him aught, though it have brought destruction on the world.*

Even the admirers of the modern opinions could not but respect this inflexible justice in the followers of the ancient faith. "Queen Mary," saith Weever, "resigned to God and holy church all those ecclesiastical revenues which had been annexed to the crown in the time of King Henry, saying, (with a Christian and princely resolution, I must confess,) to certain of her counsellors who objected that her crown imperial could not be honourably maintained and furnished without the possessions aforesaid, 'that she set more by the salvation of her soul than she did by ten kingdoms.'"†

While the strict and positive principles of Catholic morality protected dependents from the injustice of superiors, they afforded no less security to the latter against the dishonesty of those whom he employed. Merchants did not find in the cupidity of their agents such obstacles that even a lucrative operation presented them the chance of ruin if they did not personally conduct it in all the details. Assuredly, there was a great commercial activity during the middle ages; but it did not involve speculations without regard to justice, bankruptcies, and all the other attendants on a general demoralization. The modern governments have begun to discern how fatal for the state is the influence of individual cupidity, and more than once the ministers of commerce have used a language in their circulars which would not have been out of place in our churches. Not a little remarkable is the manner in which the uncompromising and precise justice of the Catholic discipline appears to have influenced even the municipal laws of cities, and the minute ordinances of police respecting them, which in point of wise provision for the health and security of the inhabitants were far different from what the moderns are in habits of supposing. The measures ordained for the city of Lyons in the time of St. Louis, and of king Charles Fifth, the ordinances of the magistrates from the year 1261 to 1483 would do honour to the best regulated municipality of the present day.‡ The interests even of learning were here promoted, as may be witnessed in the strict justice

which was required in the sale of books, and secured by the statutes of the university of Paris in the thirteenth century.* Dante beholds the usurer in hell, and says that his was a crime that offends celestial goodness. Such was the belief of the middle ages. Guibert, abbot of Nogent relates a dreadful example. A notorious usurer at Laon being on his death-bed demanding interest from a poor woman who had paid him the principal, and who in vain implored its remittance, persisted, declaring that the interest must be paid. She brings it deficient only in one penny, and places the money before him; he swears that he will have that one. She again goes away, and beyond her hopes finds it, and brings it to him. Being now in his agony, he seizes the piece of money, puts it into his mouth, and swallowing it by accident, breathes out his soul, and with that viaticum migrates one can conceive wither: his body is cast out, and deservedly rejected from sacred places. So much for the corroders of the poor.† In the council of Lyons, which condemned the heresy of those called the poor men, it was ordained that no priest should receive to confession a manifest and notorious usurer, and that no absolution could be granted to him until he had made restitution, or given sufficient security that he would do so as far as he was able. Foulques, the celebrated preacher, particularly directed his zeal against usury, which had been introduced from Italy into France about this time, and many usurers, after hearing his sermons, restored their unlawful profits to the poor.‡ When Rodolph, of Habsberg, was asked why he did not give part of the goods of the Jews to some churches, instead of distributing all among the poor, he replied, "Do you not know that these goods were acquired by usury, and therefore unjustly gained; but the church of God is holy, and can only be honoured with goods that have been obtained with justice."§ The hospitality and munificence of Reginaldo Scrovinio were celebrated through all Italy; but the generous use which he made of his immense riches could not tranquillize his conscience. Contrite for the usury of which he had been guilty, and for which Dante rashly places him in the Inferno, he went to Rome, and being enjoined to make restitution, was absolved by Pope Benedict,

* Parad. XX.

+ A Discourse of Funeral Monuments, 115.

‡ Paradin Hist. de Lyons, Liv. II. cap. 67, 68, 87, and 110.

* Hist. Universit. Par. Tom. III.

+ Guiberti de Novigento de Vita Propria, Lib. III. cap. 18.

‡ Bulaeus, Hist. Universit. Parisiensis, Tom. II.

§ Trithem. Chronic. Hirsangiensis ad an. 1283.

who had been his guest and friend. After his death, Henry, his son, moved by filial piety, and concern for his soul, purchased the arena, at Padua, on which had been a theatre, and on the spot erected a magnificent church, which he adorned with the paintings of Zoto.* Those who would learn what were the usurious iniquities of the Jews, and their abettors in Italy, many of whom were persons in authority, in the fifteenth century, should consult the sermons or Bernardine of Monte Feltro, whom they sought to poison, on account of his zeal in protecting the people from them, and the report of local historians of that time, commemorating the foundation of mounts of piety, with the pontifical bulls establishing the same, which were instituted at his suggestion in almost all the cities of Italy, a glorious monument of the order of St. Francis, in testimony of its affection for the poor.†

The church never allowed any money to be made of money, independent of compensation for danger of loss or temporal injury.‡ Calvin denied that usury was a sin, whom many heretics followed, amongst others Claudius Salmasius, though with strange inconsistency they condemned the mounts of piety for receiving any remuneration, probably because they were sanctioned by the popes, though these were administered by charitable persons who received no salary. Indeed in some places at first, as at Vicenza, money was given freely, only with an admonition to be grateful, and an intimation that whatever was voluntarily given would be expended in charity to others; in consequence of which many offered a greater sum than was prescribed by Bernardine. Although the church has not given any formal decision, and it be probable that the question respecting the practice of northern nations in modern times, will be, nevertheless, determined practically in its favour, still, it is certain, that during the middle ages, the lending of money, which was of no immediate use to themselves, formed one of the offices of humanity and charity, to which men and Christians believed themselves bound;§ and St. Thomas was of opinion that they had no right to make the person pay for the advantage he derived from the loan, because that results from the use to which he applied it, and they had no right, he thought, to make him pay for

his own industry.* But if by lending money men suffered inconvenience, or incurred danger, in that case they were at all times permitted to receive a moderate interest. The legislation respecting the rate of interest in the states, which embraced the new opinions, presented a curious example of what might result when the system of Catholic morality was abandoned, as may be witnessed by referring to the acts of the English parliament in the reign of Elizabeth. Again the Catholicity of the justice of the ages of faith did not admit of those separations and divisions which appear in the writings of Macrobius and Plotinus, who enumerate four degrees of virtue, or of Plato, who even presents virtue occasionally in several detached parts, as piety in Euthyphro, fortitude in Laches, temperance in Charmides, friendship in Lysides; but as in Meno it was beheld in connection with all virtue. Some indeed of the ancient sages, as Menedimus of Eretria, and Ariston of Chio, and also Zeno, maintained that virtue was one and without plurality of parts, though men spoke of it under different terms;† but Crysippus thought that each virtue was something distinct and perfect in itself, and so introduced, as Plato says, a whole swarm of virtues into philosophy. Duns Scotus observed, "that there is no distinction of essential perfections in God;"‡ quoting St. Augustin, "Non sicut in creatura sapientia et justitia sunt duæ qualitates, ita in Deo, sed quæ justitia ipsa est, et bonitas."§ Similarly, the fruits of essential grace in men emanating from one principle were held to be in necessary connection with each other. "Neither is there," as St. Clemens Alexandrinus saith, "one virtue for women and another for men, but one and the same for both; for temperance and justice, and all other virtues are alike to be cultivated by man and woman, freeman and slave, since one and the same virtue belongs to one and the same nature."|| "Virtutis vis," says Marsilius Ficinus, "in unione potius quam in divisione consistit."¶ St. Gregory speaks to the same effect, "Neque enim unaquæque verè virtus est, si mixta aliis virtutibus non est."** Natural and imperfect virtues might exist separately, but it was deemed impossible for any one to be

* Bernardini Scardeonii Hist. Patavinæ, Lib. III. 13.

† Wadd. Ann. Minorum, Vola. XIV. and XV.

‡ Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. IV. tit. XVI.

§ Id. Ibid.

* In III. d. 37. Qu. I. Art. 6.

† Plutarch de Virtute.

‡ In Lib. I. Sent. Dist. VIII. 4. 9.

§ S. August. de Trin. XV. 5.

|| Stromat. Lib. IV. 8.

¶ Epist. Lib. I.

** S. Grg. Mor. Lib. I. c. 9.

perfectly gentle and mild, without being at the same time chaste, brave, magnanimous, humble, sober, just, and prudent, in the same manner as one sin could not be committed, and but one sin. An ancient author illustrates this by an example, "An injury is inflicted; faith teaches that revenge is displeasing to Jesus Christ, and by that light the understanding says that we must not take revenge. Hope says, by conquering this temptation we shall be nearer acquiring an immense good. Charity says, our neighbour is to be beloved even when he does evil. Prudence says this is a favourable opportunity of preparing a crown for ourselves. Justice admonishes us to give to every one what belongs to him, and it is for God to punish evil. Modesty says, do not admit the deformity of anger, which has so hideous an exterior. Humility says that we should give place to others, and that we deserve more than we receive. Temperance forbids us to indulge in the hateful pleasure of vengeance. Magnanimity says, be gentle not only on small but on great occasions. Behold how the acts of virtue conspire and cohere!"* This truth Giles of Colonna illustrates, by remarking that a magnanimous man is necessarily humble,† and St. Clemens Alexandrinus by showing that temperance is not confined to pleasures only, but that there is a temperance in regard to the tongue, and to possessions, and to desires. "By these two things," says Richard of St. Victor, "pride and concupiscence, the prince of this world, dwelleth in us, by pride in the mind, by concupiscence in the flesh. 'Venit princeps hujus mundi,' says Christ, 'et in me non habet quicquam.' For all the possession of the ancient enemy is sin, to which is attached as an inheritance for ever, a land full of thorns and briars, a land cursed of God, covered with obscurity and darkness. Of all this substance nothing was found in Christ."‡ St. Odo, the second abbot of Cluni, reduces these to one principle of injustice, observing that pride is the mother of all vices, and that therefore the Psalmist says, "In superbia ceciderunt qui operantur iniquitatem." "No one," he remarks, "works iniquity externally, unless he has fallen internally by pride: for if the spirit be devoutly subject to the Lord, the flesh cannot unlawfully raise itself against the

spirit; but if it proudly despises its Author, justly is it despised by its vassal flesh. Therefore, the venom of lust is borne from the root and merit of pride."* In short, those who understood and followed the broad commandments of Catholicism, beheld, as the Psalmist beautifully expresses it, the end of all perfection—in manners, as in wisdom, in arts and sciences, as well as in morality and life; for it requires but a moment's reflection to discern that the justice of the ages of faith extended even to the sphere of art. What good faith and integrity is observable in their very architecture? Here is no affectation and desire of temporary applause. The most obscure and retired parts are as elaborately finished as those which are the most exposed to view. Ascend to those aerial deserts, to the highest summit of the spires of a Gothic cathedral, to which the tiler ventures to creep with trembling. You will often find there, solitary under the eye of God, exposed to the blasts of the eternal wind, some delicate work, some masterpiece of sculpture, on which the pious workman wore away his life: not a name, not a sign, not a letter; he worked for God only, and for the remedy of his soul. In pagan art, as in morals, the maxim universal agreed with that sentiment of Phædra,

ἐμοὶ γὰρ εἴη μῆτε λαμβάνειν καλὰ,
μήτ' ἀσχερὰ δρῶσι μάρτυρας πολλοὺς ἔχειν.†

Indeed in relation to art the admirable efficacy of the Catholic morals has been often pointed out, and though in the third book we had occasion to consider it in detail, I cannot leave this specular mount without casting again one look towards it. Come ascend with me to the high regions of the cathedral of Fribourg in Brigaw. Let us rest awhile in this octagonal hall, within the tower commanding such a delightful view over the city and the mountains of the Black Forest. This cathedral was built by Erwin von Sternbach, who was also the architect of that at Strasburg, a man, as a living French critic observes, who ought to have the renown of Michael Angelo; but the middle ages were careless of human glory, and Erwin von Sternbach was more anxious about his salvation in Paradise than to obtain immortality in the

* Instruct. Novitiorum, cap. 22. aut P. Joan. à Jesu Mariæ.

† De Regim. Prin. II. l. 25.

‡ Richard. S. Vict. Sermo in Die Paschæ.

* S. Odonis Abb. Clun. Collationum, Lib. II. Bibliothec. Cluniacensis.

† Hippoyt. 402.

human memory. Truly, the thirst for justice in the middle ages supplied men with prodigious means for performing great things, even of a material order. As Spedalieri says, "Their system of ethics was efficacious, administering an internal force not only to sustain man in the practice of his duty, but to encourage and assist him in the development of his genius." Our modern generations have their budgets and their taxes; they had faith which could inspire thoughts that would never occur to our councils of civil works, and which could realize them with a facility that would never arise from the vote of a parliament or the approbation of a scientific journal. But let us descend and proceed.

The general ideas of justice in the ages of faith, were derived from the example of Christ, from the models which he proposed in his instructions, and from the spectacle and observation of nature, "Christ," says the Master of the Sentences, "died to be for man both form and cause. The form of virtue and humility, the cause of glory and freedom, the form of obeying God unto death, and the cause of deliverance and beatitude."* Hence, as Marsilius Ficinus says, "Christ was a certain living moral book of divine philosophy, sent from heaven and manifested to human eyes to teach us true justice, as possessing nothing of his own, and rendering to God and man what is due to each,—to God adoration, and to man benevolence."† A great writer of those times, after citing the words of the Gospel, "teaching them to do whatsoever I have commanded you," proceeds thus, "O happy and meritorious obedience, which thinks of nothing but constantly how to fulfil the will of our heavenly Father! O how holy the soul which endeavours to resign itself and to render its whole life conformable to the manners of Christ! Truly Jesus Christ hath left the best example of living to us all. He is the master of all; he himself is the book and rule of the religious, he himself the convent of monks, he himself the text and gloss of the decretals: he is the form of the life of clerics, the doctrine of laics, the light of the faithful, the joy of the just, the glory of angels, the end and consummation of all the desires of the saints."‡ The second of these rules is beautifully illustrated by Hugo of St. Victor, who after citing the

divine words, "unless you become like little children," speaks in the following manner. "What then are the manners of a boy? He is not solicitous nor covetous: he exercises himself in simple and innocent play, and he so loves what is domestic, that if he were even transferred to a throne, he would rather desire the ancient things and what he was accustomed to. He knows his father's grounds; now he is in the field, now in the garden, now in the orchard, now in the meadow, now at the fountain, now in the vineyard. He knows the peculiar delights which belong to each season of the year. In the spring he follows ploughing and sowing, in the summer, reaping, and in the autumn the vintage. Every where he has pastime, mirth, refection, delight; and besides these daily and domestic feasts which he enjoys at home, by going out sometimes to taste servants' fare, he returns with more relish to former delights; he loves to gather the new fruits, to roast the corn before it be matured in the ear, to pick out the first ripe grapes, to carry home a young bird with great joy to the house in order to love and nourish it. If he knows that his father is about to go to any town or castle, or to market, or to some solemnity with the intention of returning immediately, he wishes to go with him that he may see new and unaccustomed things, so that on his return he may relate what he has seen to his comrades, describing the appearance of the men, the situation of the place, the extent of the city, the height of the house, the abundance of things on sale. Thus when he knows that he is to return, he gladly leaves home; but if he were not to hope for a return, and if any one were to attempt to compel him to go forth, he would not leave his father's house without lamentable groans and great sorrow. He is glad to have diversion abroad, but he wishes to have no permanent abode any where excepting in his father's house with his domestics, among whom he was born and with whom he was bred: he desires to live with them, and to grow old amongst them, nor would he be separated from them even in death, but he would wish to be always with those who have been known and dear to him in life. Nothing beyond this he seeks, nothing more does he desire. In like manner then, let us study to converse in the house of the Lord, and we too shall find peace and rest, and pleasure; let us be simple, not desiring foreign things, loving more the delights which God hath

* Lib. III. Distinct. 18.

† Marsil. Ficin. de Christiana Relig. cap. 23.

‡ Thom. à Kempis, Serm. I. Pars III.

prepared for us, and which are found in his house, rather than the blandishments of this world. Here we have transparent fountains, flowery meadows, wide and swelling fields, rich vineyards, abundant flocks, fertile crops, fruitful trees, irrigated gardens, and delights of every kind, all in short that the mind can desire or possess. Do you ask what are these fountains, meadows, and gardens? The examples of the just, the sources of wisdom, and the sweets of all virtue; for we have our feet directed in the ways of the commandments of God, that remembering his mercies which have been from all generations, we may exercise our heart and enkindle our desire in his love: we can contemplate all the works of our restoration, from the beginning to the end of the world, according to the course of time, the events of things, and the deeds of men.* Finally, manners were not left without participating in the influence of that wisdom which is derived from the spectacle and observation of the visible world. The great guides of Catholic ages were men of Wordsworth's type, who intensely studied with a painter's eye and poet's heart, all the spirit-moving imagery of earth and sea, and air; men, in short, whose whole lives flowed in a course of sympathy divine with nature. Much they learned from each walk through their forest glades, where birds and brooks from leafy dells chimed forth delicious music; for not alone the cooing of the gentle dove, but every bird and flower inspired their meditative hearts. The efficacy and justice of this rule must be even in a peculiar manner apparent, methinks, to those who are fallen upon the present days, though so little consonant with the muse; for when they walk on a morning in the spring through those parks and gardens of their capitals, once the haunts, perhaps, of the hooded brethren, of Francis or St. Bruno, and behold the fresh innocent generation of young leaves bursting forth simultaneously with such order,—the only heaven-inspired things that now remain there,—it is impossible for them not to think occasionally with astonishment and sorrow on the crowd of intellectual creatures around them, so obdurate to justice, and disobedient and out of tune amidst the sweet creation that was intended to utter one universal voice of love and praise. Hugo de St. Victor, in his work entitled, "On Beasts," instructs men in various duties from the example of divers irrational animals

* Hugo de S. Victor, *Institutiones Monast. de Vanitate Mundi*, Lib. II.

and other creatures. He, too, like the great poet of the Lakes, would remark in speaking of the wren and her nest, that "The hermit has no finer eye for shadowy quietness." The monks had frequently that intimate acquaintance with the manners of birds, which Olaus Magnus evinces in his history, where he describes with such amusing simplicity those of the northern tribes.

It was in the spirit of those times to consider beasts and birds as endowed with characters analogous to human; and so successful were the fabulists that almost every bird and beast was known to the middle ages as a personage under an appropriate name, which in some languages, as with Renard in the French, by a singular fate remained to the animal, having superseded its own generic appellation. Giles of Colonna, too, throughout his work on government, cites the example of animals to instruct men in various moral duties; and Bartholomew Glaunville, of the family of the counts of Suffolk, an English Franciscan of the fourteenth century, followed in the same track in his work on the advantages of philosophy to a theologian, in which, with learning, and subtle observation, he explained the properties of material things, by means of which he threw light on difficult passages of the Holy Scripture. The most interesting illustration of this rule may be found, perhaps, in the rhyme composed by Alanus de Insulis, the universal doctor.

"Omnis mundi creatura
Quasi liber et pictura,
Nobis est et speculum,
Nostræ vitæ, nostræ mortis,
Nostrī status, nostræ sortis,
Fidele signaculum.

Nostrum statum pingit rosa.
Nostrī status decens glossa,
Nostræ vitæ lectio.
Quæ dum primo mane floret,
Defloratus flos effloret
Vespertino senio.
Ergo spirans flos expirat
In pallorem, dum delirat
Oriundo moriens.

Sic ætatis ver humanæ,
Juventutis primo mane,
Reflorescit paululum.
Mane tamen hoc excludit,
Vitæ vesper, dum concludit
Vitale corpusculum.

Cujus decor dum perorat
Ejus decus, mox deflorat
Ætas, in qua defluit.
Fit flos fœnum, gemma lutum:
Homo cinis, dum tributum
Homo morti tribuit.

Cujus vita, cujus esse
Pœna, labor et necesse,
Vitam morte claudere.
Sic mors vitam, risum luctus,
Umbra diem, portum fluctus,
Mane claudit vespere.

In nos primum dat insultum
Pœna mortis gerens vultum
Labor mortis histrio.
Nos proponit in laborem :
Nos assumit in dolorem :
Mortis est conclusio.

Ergo clausum sub hac lege
Statum tuum homo lege,
Tuum esse respice.

Quid fuisti nasciturus,
Quid in præsens, quid futurus,
Diligenter inspicere.

Luge pœnam, culpam plange,
Motus frœna, fastum frange,
Pone supercilia.
Mentis rector et auriga
Mentem rege, fluxus riga
Ne defluant in devia."

Thus were truth and justice taught by every garden, grove, and field, which preached, though mute, "of all things blending into one."

CHAPTER XI.



ENOUGH has been seen to prove the fact of a second creation of the human race, albeit, in harmony with the first, and only a fresh manifestation of an endless love. Still somewhat remains to complete this scene of our historic vision—something as yet but faintly sketched, or left for others to supply, which we should strive to develop with more force and precision. Attentive consideration is due, for instance, to the fact that the justice of the ages of faith did not flow from the inclination or partialities of individuals, but from the authoritative promulgation of a universal law recognised as divine. The character of all ages which have not been under the influence of faith, is independence of authority. "If I should resolve to fast at all, I will fast on whatever day I choose, by my own choice, and with full liberty." It was thus that Ærius used to speak according to St. Epiphanius. One might remark here how unamiable and offensive even to the eyes of humanity is this condition of self-will, and how the principle of Catholic obedience imparted both grace and security to virtue. Does a youth practise any act from a private opinion which is counter to the common voice? He is referred to the judgment of men more acute or more experienced than himself, and if he persist he may, perhaps, very justly incur the odium attached to singularity and obstinate perverseness: but in yielding to the highest authority, he is invulnerable,

for if he should incur blame in the fulfilment of duty, he will be supported by a reliance not on his own abilities and superior judgment, but on the cloud of witnesses, on the unerring wisdom and infallible reason of the church, which commands him to adhere though he should have to stand alone, to the maxims of faith and of the ancient honour. Hence it is noted by S. Bonaventura, "quod propter alterius scandalum non debemus recedere a virtute justitiæ," "for our Lord both in word and deed gave scandal to the Pharisees,"* a remark to be pressed on those who are always trembling lest by observing Catholic manners, they should offend persons who are separated from unity. It was, however, the determination of the will which constituted the chief advantage arising from an authoritative rule of manners; for however magnificently some philosophers may declaim, justice hath but little to expect on earth when men are wholly left to the guidance of a mind which has banished the sense of responsibility, and to maintain their principles on the same ground as that on which the giant of Homer defended himself against the reproach of his captive who warned him to beware of Jove, the avenger of injured guests, to whom he replied, Νήπιος εἰς, & ξείν',—"I care not for Jove, my will is my law."

During the middle ages, doctrines were

* Meditationes Vitæ Christi, cap. 38.

the source of all laws and discipline; as canons were nothing but conclusions drawn from theological principles, that is, from the Gospel.* "When pride and spiritual riches, and the liberty of a light mind existed, there," says the author of *Theologia Germanica*, "could be no Christian or true imitator of Christ."† "In hac vita," continues this writer, speaking of the Christian life, "perit omnis ipsitas, ego, meum, et similia. Finally, nothing is beheld or sought after but good, on account of good and as good. But where there is a false light, there is no regard to Christ or to virtue; whatever is accommodated and pleasant to nature, is then sought for and embraced. Hence arises a false and inordinate liberty, by which a man is rendered secure and negligent of every thing. True light is the seed of God, and therefore it bears the fruit of God, but false light is the seed of Satan, and where that is sown, there grows up the fruit of Satan and Satan himself."‡

Æschylus terms God *Méyas εὐθυσος* *Spōrōn*.§ This was in every sense a true definition in the middle ages. God, not human opinion, directed immediately the manners of men, which while dependent upon doctrines for their rule, derived their force and efficacy from the authority of a divine legislator. "One thing only is to be feared," says St. Chrysostom, "that is sin." Alcuin proclaimed this in verse,

"Plus æterna Dei Christi est metuenda potestas,
Quam terrena quidem, quæ velut umbra volat."||

The Archduke Leopold William, of Austria, assumed for device upon his shield, the words "*Timore domini*," to express the sentiment which was ever present to his mind. "I charge you," says St. Gregory to Justin, in his letter to the Prætor of Sicily, which is taken into the decrees of the church, "by the omnipotent God, to whose tremendous judgment we are to give an account of all our actions, to have always, before your eyes the extension of his glory. 'Quam sit vita brevis aspiciat; ad quem quandoque ituri estis iudicem cujus iudicium potestatem geritis cogitate.'"¶ You perceive on what motives he placed reliance. "It is not advisable that we should be for ever silent to those under our

authority," says the Abbot Elfric, writing to Wulstan, archbishop of York, "for if it be not the principal herald, who is to announce that the Judge cometh?" Such was, in fact, the summary of all the ecclesiastical charges, "the Judge cometh." So far were they from asserting the simple and unconditional benevolence of God, and on that assumption going on, like Paley, to found a moral system and a rule of life, as if God were not a God of justice as well as a God of mercy.

Men in these days talk of securing justice by constitutional laws, by their representative assemblies, by publicity as the surest test, and the force of general opinion as the best rule of human action; but it was not by such means, which have more show than real efficacy, that society was protected during the ages of faith. It was by the fear of heaven, it was by the preaching of the clergy, it was even by the warnings of solemn poets; as when a Martial d'Auvergne, in his *Vigils of the death of Charles the Seventh*, concludes with such words as these:

"Et n'est roy, empereur, duc, conte,
Qui ne soit subject à la mort,
Et qu'il ne faille rendre conte
De ce qu'on a fait droit ou tort."**

It was by a Dante disclosing those visions of future punishment, placing before men's eyes

"The border of the crimson-seething flood,
Whence, from those steep'd within, loud shrieks
arose;"

That region of eternal woe

"Where sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
Resounded through the air pierc'd by no star,
That e'en he wept at entering."†

It is not unimportant to remark that the views respecting the motives of human action in more recent times, have been opposed to all the primitive traditions of mankind. Demophon, in the *Heraclides* of Euripides, had three reasons not to deny the petition of Iolaus and the suppliants,—the remembrance of their near relation in blood, the debt of gratitude which he still owed to their father, but what was the greatest and above all, the thought of Jove and reverence for his altar.‡

Finally, the morality of the ages of faith,

* *Les Vigiles de la Mort du Roi Charles VII.*
† X. ‡ 236.

* Benedict. XIV. De Sacrificio Missæ Præfat. XXI.

† *Theologia Germanica*, cap. 24.

‡ Id. cap. 38. § Eumenid. 273.

|| *Mabillon vet. Analect.*

¶ *Ivonis Carnot. Decret. Pars XVI. cap. 18.*

was not superstitious or delusive, but spiritual and living. Those devotions which we examined in the last book, those supplications of the blessed friends of God, were not to be sterile, empty, and deceptive things. "What sort of justice would it be," says St. Chrysostom, "to venerate the saints and to neglect sanctity? The first step of devotion is to love holiness, and afterwards those that are holy: without reason, therefore, doth he honour the just, who loveth not justice." To live well, in the language of the middle ages, was to live by faith; and that, as far as related to the sphere of ordinary justice, was to live, as the Roman philosopher says, "Constanter, graviter, sapienter, fortiter." Devotion knew of no prayers which did not include imitation. It may wound the pride of men professedly philosophers, to hear that the chaplet would dispense them from consulting the Stagyrte, but nothing is more true, for history alone is sufficient to prove that no discourses of the ethic page were wanting to the church, "quæ ædificatur ut civitas, cujus participatio ejus in idipsum."

Modern historians having read that King Robert caused holy relics to be secretly removed from the shrine upon which certain persons, who would probably perjure themselves, were about to swear, have concluded that the morality of these ages was little better than abject superstition, proving clearly the justice of their affirmation that the science of morals is now better understood; but they should remark that the error which they ascribe to this devout king, arising from a weakness that is at all times in human nature, was expressly denounced by writers of that age. Evidently that act was merely the result of his wish to prevent unhappy men from accumulating sin, by adding sacrilege to perjury; or at the most, it merely indicated an opinion which has the sanction of the legislature at the present day, that the asseveration of a falsehood upon a sacred object, as the holy scriptures, was more to be dreaded than a simple utterance of the same without such formalities, though that is an opinion which abstractedly the moral writers of the middle age condemned. "It is thought by some," says Iona, in his celebrated work *De Institutione Laicali*, "that he only is obnoxious to the crime of perjury who falsely swears over the bones of some holy man, or over relics, or upon the altar or the Gospel, but he who invokes God upon

any thing, whether great or small, is to be held guilty."*

The importance attached to diverse minute acts, has also been supposed to argue a degradation in the morals of the middle ages; though if we attend to the reasons for which they were inculcated, and hear the explanations which were continually given respecting them, and observe their practical consequences in history, a judicious inquirer will be slow to assent to any such judgment. Men of philosophic heads, who were ardently attached to Christian simplicity, like Jerome Savanorola, were able easily to prove that Catholic manners were not superstitious, though they exactly followed all the approved ceremonies of the Roman church;† and saints of the desert, who had long experience in the direction of human minds, could affirm with perfect conviction that if they had been practised, some men, whose crimes stand in historic records, would not have fallen. "If Peter," says blessed John Climachus, "had repeated to himself sixty or an hundred times on his way to Olivet, 'Dixi, custodiam vias meas, ut non delinquam in lingua mea,' he would not so easily have thrice denied his Lord."‡ When questioning history in relation to such duties, if not great things are to be the result of our investigation, I hope it will be such as are well; for, as Demosthenes says in Stobæus, "Not what is great is well, but what is well is great." And this, I believe, will be the issue, for the moralists of the middle ages might truly say with Raban Maur, "Ubi etiam cavendus est æternus interitus, omnia sunt magna quæ dicimus."§

Lewis of Grenada, after quoting our Lord's words to the Pharisee, in which he summed up all the particular acts of veneration which Mary Magdalen had performed towards him when anointing his feet, adds, "My mind receives a wonderful consolation from this enumeration of the offices, for I conclude from it, with what eyes the infinite goodness of God contemplates the actions of pious men, when all the circumstances of a good work, and as I may say, particles, are so distinctly noted, that a simple duty is divided

* Iona Aurelianensis Episcop. de Institut. Laicali, Lib. II. cap. 25, apud Dacher. Spicileg. Tom. I.

† Savanorola de Simplicitate Vitæ Christianæ, cap. I.

‡ Grad. XI.

§ Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, Lib. III. c. 32.

minutely into as many parts as it has circumstances, to each of which a reward is given.* These words furnish the key to a mystery involving much that gives offence to the moderns in the morality of the ages of faith. Even when abuse may have crept in, the superstition did not arise from the external act, but from the sole cupidities of man, which would have been no less in action though there had been no such external act. It is a gross error to suppose that we can get rid of the evil by changing its form. "When the Corsair promises wax, the galley is in danger," says the Spaniards. But were devout men, the contemporaries of St. Jerome, therefore superstitious, who offered their lights before the shrines of the saints, as a sublime symbol of the honour due to the friends of God? And have the moderns eradicated the superstition from amongst themselves by removing the lights and the shrines? The men of latter ages in general have fallen into this error, which has been able to disorganize the whole frame of the social state. In what society was superstition more hateful, than in that which was frankly Catholic? and in what had it greater force, than in that which professed to be reformed? Fuller acknowledges that too many in his days of reform were like Pharaoh's magicians, who could conjure up with their charms more new frogs, but could not remove those multitudes of frogs which were there before. With respect to the supposed insignificance of certain actions recommended by the Catholic moralists, men would do well to pause before they censure.

Cicero extols the saying of Pythagoras, "Tum maxime, et pietatem et religionem versari in animis, cum rebus divinis operam daremus;" and the saying of Thales, that all visible things were full of divinity, so that the divinity should be in the eyes as well as in the minds of men.† But a more striking fact is adduced in evidence by John Picus of Mirandola, when he shows, in allusion to this subject, that one of the twelve conditions of a lover, is to love all things which belong to him that is loved, all his friends, houses, vests, and images.‡ All these minute observances might be vindicated, in the words even of a great modern poet, who says,

"Thing and thought
Mix strangely; trifles light, and partly vain,

* Id. In Festo B. Mariæ Magdal. Concio. II.

† De Legibus, II. 11.

‡ XII. Regulæ Dirigentes.

Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler being:
Yes, lady, while about your neck is wound
(Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright cord,
What witchery, for pure gifts of inward seeing
Lurks in it, Memory's helper, Fancy's lord,
For precious tremblings in your bosom found!"

The saying of Gerson had become a maxim with spiritual men, that God was a rewarder not of verbs but of adverbs; that is, he did not regard so much the substance of the action, as the manner and circumstances belonging to it, which grammarians express by adverbial terminations. The more noble theologians held with Drexelius, in his golden little book "De recta intentione," that a virtual intention in the performance of particular actions, although sufficient for the moral integrity of the work, is not sufficient for procuring an increase of grace. Moreover, it should be observed, that all the rewards of devotion of necessity implied holiness or amendment of manners, and that the performance of no exercise of piety was reconcilable with a neglect of any one of the essential duties of a virtuous life. Against the superstitions or vanities of the learned, the moralists of the middle ages were equally guarded.

"What do the holy Apostles teach us?" demands S. Bonaventura, "not the dramatic, not how to read Plato, not how to entangle ourselves in the subtilties of Aristotle, not how to learn always, and never to come to the knowledge of truth; but they teach me how to live. Do you think it a small matter to know how to live? truly, it is a great thing, yea, the greatest of all; for he does not live who is inflated with pride, debased by luxury, and infested with other plagues: since this is not to live but to confound life, and to approach to the gates of death:—but you live well if you live orderly, sociably, and humbly; orderly with regard to yourself, sociably in relation to others, and humbly in respect to God; orderly if you be careful in your conversation, to preserve your ways right in the sight of the Lord, and in the sight of your neighbour; sociably if you seek to be loved and to love, and to show yourself gentle and affable, and to bear not only patiently, but willingly, the infirmities of your brethren, as well of their manners as of their bodies; humbly, if doing all this, you avoid the spirit of vanity, and deny all consent to it."†

* Wordsworth.

† Meditat. Vitæ Christi, cap. 48.

Indeed, to display the living character of the Catholic morality during the middle ages, words need not be multiplied. The foundation of all sanctity was known to be purity of conscience,* which was only attainable by the supernatural strength communicated in the mysteries of the Christian faith. "The life of the interior man," says Richard of St. Victor, "is divine grace, for as the body can do nothing without its life, the soul, so our interior man can do nothing good without divine grace."† In regard to the Divine Scriptures, men paid no Judaic and superstitious regard to the letter, but with an intellectual reverence and evangelical freedom they sought to imbibe and propagate the spirit. Petrus de Riga, of the church of Rheims, a scholastic and poet of the twelfth century, did not scruple to comprise the decalogue in four verses :

"Sperne Deos, fugito perjuriam, sabbata serva,
Sit tibi patris honor, sit tibi matris amor
Non sis occisor, fur, mœchus, testis iniquus :
Vicinisque thorum, resque caveto suas."‡

Lines so little suspected by men of the middle ages of hidden mischief, that they are quoted as the decalogue by Robert de Sorbon, in his sermon on conscience.

In truth, there is nothing more striking in the whole moral history of those times, than the prodigious vitality which distinguished men in regard to justice. Far were they from imagining that negative merit in morals was sufficient for the fulfilment of that which was to assuage the soul's long thirst. St. Cæsarius, of Arles, had especially addressed those who think it sufficient for eternal life, to avoid evil without wishing to do good, which discourse had become universally celebrated. "There is a certain race of men in the holy church," says Hugo de St. Victor, "to whom to believe, means only not to contradict faith, who live as they were born, not in loving or in approving that in which they were born; who, if they had been born elsewhere, would not have been of the faithful, for they hold faith through the custom of life, not from love; and there is another race of men more attentively considering the state of human life, and on that account beginning to fluctuate in faith since they behold many averse and alienated from faith, and yet who, being

led by the piety of faith, from two doubtful things, choose that which they learned from the Christian doctrine; and there is another race of men, certain and confirmed in their faith, whom God confirms either by external miracles, or by internal inspiration."* During the middle ages, men who were in earnest in every thing, set their hearts on whatever their reason judged best; and said, in the expressive language of their romantic writers, "*Le cœur faict l'homme et non mye le corps. Car le cœur est sire du corps et le corps est serf du cœur.*"† They possessed what an ancient disciple of the Stagyrte styles a certain depth and greatness of soul—*ἔχου δὲ τὴν βάθος τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ μέγεθος.*‡ In short, it was known that in every state all depended upon what was the will. Indeed, St. Augustin says, "*Omnes nihil aliud quam voluntates sunt.*"§ And he illustrates this by citing the instance of the good and bad angels, of whom the nature is the same, the will different.|| The inference is drawn by Dante :

— "Hence thou must infer
That love is germin of each virtue in ye,
And of each act no less, that merits pain."¶

St. Thomas says, that every act of man is good and meritorious, or morally evil and demeritorious, according as it proceeds or not from the deliberation of reason. Indeed, not only as his disciple, the blessed doctor, shows this whole beatitude of the just, is eminently of choice, for as prudence is in the intellect, and the ten virtues of the Stagyrte in the sensitive appetite, so justice is in the will; ** but also St. Bernardine, of Sienna, showed that each of the eight beatitudes implies and requires an intention, "for it is not said," he remarks, "*beati qui tristantur,*" but "*beati qui lugent.*"†† "All can be just," says Richard of St. Victor, "if they perfectly wish to be just."‡‡ And again he proceeds even further, "*Sola enim justa velle est jam justum esse.*"§§ The answer of St. Thomas, the angel of the school, to his sister, who asked what she should do to be

* Hugo de S. Vict. *Eruditionis Theolog. ex Miscellan. Lib. I. tit. 18.*

† Gyron le Courtois, f. CCXXXVIII.

‡ De Virtut. et Vit.

§ De Civitate Dei, Lib. XIV. 6.

|| Id. Lib. XII. 1. ¶ Purg. XVII.

** *Ægid. Rom. de Regim. II. l. c. 3.*

†† S. Bern. *Senens. Tom. III. Sermon. VII.*

‡‡ Richardi S. Victor, de *Præparatione Animæ ad Contemplationem*, cap. 2.

§§ Id. De *Contemplatione*, Lib. III. 16.

* Ludovic. Blosii *Consolat. Pusillan. I.*

† Richard S. Vict. de *Eruditione Hominis Interioris*, Lib. I. cap. 3.

‡ *Bulæus Hist. Univers. Paris, Tom. II.*

saved, was this, "wish to be saved!" "O summam Dei Patris liberalitatem," exclaims Picus, of Mirandula, "summam et admirandam hominis felicitatem, cui datum id habere quod optat, id esse quod velit."* Such is the lesson conveyed to Dante by the spirit of Marco Lombardo:

"Light have ye still to follow evil or good,
And of the will free power, which, if it stand,
Firm and unwearied in heaven's first essay,
Conquers at last, so it be cherish'd well,
Triumphant over all."

The Christian religion had, in fact, formalized and developed the great truth which was first disclosed in the Judaic traditions, that evil was voluntary and immaterial; for in all the ancient systems of the East evil is represented as involuntary, and its action wholly material, synonymous with the concupiscence of nature. What was it, in fact, which imparted that moral grandeur which has surprised and delighted so many modern authors in the history of the middle ages, prompting the poet to exclaim:

"In those old romantic days,
Mighty were the soul's commandments
To support, restrain, or raise.
Foes might hang upon their path, snakes rustle
near,
But nothing from their inward selves had they
to fear."†

And giving occasion to the historian's remark, that even times of little learning as the fifth century in France, were nevertheless ages in which abounded men of great characters;‡ It is not that in former times the whole of nature was more living and spiritual than at present, but that there was a hearty desire and a decided will. The moral grandeur arose from the prevalence of that wish, which was the desire so beautifully expressed by Richard of St. Victor, "to attain to that life in which no one dies, no one hungers, no one thirsts, no one fears an enemy, no one betrays a friend."§ "For what else constitutes a character," as Novalis remarks, "but a perfectly formed will?"|| What is it that now prevents men otherwise free from attaining to that high intellectual sovereignty, possessed by so many members of the heavenly republic in the middle

ages? It is the fatalism introduced by the religious innovators of the sixteenth century. It is the opinion that man is but a passive instrument under grace; for that was their main point. So that Erasmus, in his work *De Libero Arbitrio*, struck a blow which went to the very heart of Luther, as that arch chieftain felt. "Who will deliver me from Erasmus?" was his cry. "May God take away Erasmus from me!" His anger against other men seemed, as Michelet remarked, rather an anger of good humour: he was red when he wrote against the Popes, but he grew pale when he replied to Erasmus. What is it which renders the institutions of catholicism, as they existed in the middle ages, so odious to the moderns, that the whole bent of their mind is now to sweep them from the earth? It is their own want of a fixed and decided will. This want alone renders hateful to them the monastic rule, the discipline of holy orders, and the inviolable character of the marriage state. These wavering reeds, so shaken by every wind, seem to fear the immutability which belongs essentially to whatever is Catholic; they would ask delay; they would have liberty to return; they may wish it to-day, but will they wish it to-morrow? Oh! these deliberate fools, how often, when they do choose, they have the wisdom by their wit to lose!

The spirit of the Catholic morality was wholly opposed to this practical fatalism, which is so characteristic of men at the present day, and which gives the true explanation why the language and conduct of many ingenious and learned persons are in contradiction with each other. The principle of their false security is combated by St. Chrysostom, in his homilies upon Providence. God has said, "I have placed before you fire and water, life and death; stretch forth your hand: I leave you free to choose."* The demon, on the contrary, says, "It is not in your power to make a choice: necessity has pronounced for you: it is for you to submit." So we may hear it argued by some who say, you have been born under this discipline; your relations, your friends, have all professed it; all your duties in life require you to remain attached to it, at least externally. Your name is chooser, but you cannot choose. The Catholic religion may be true, but you have not been destined to embrace it, as is evident from the cir-

* Joan. Picus Mirandula de *Hominum Dignitate*. + Wordsworth.

‡ Staudenmaier Johan. *Scotus Erigema und die Wissenschaft Seiner Zeit* I. 64.

§ Richardi S. Vict. *de Baptismo Christi*. || *Schriften* II. 284.

• Eccl. xv. 17.

cumstance of your birth in a country where it is rejected. But if necessity exists, to resume the reasoning of St. Chrysostom, "there is no such thing as justice; if necessity exists, faith, religion, are only vain words, without any sense; if necessity exists, God does not exist; if necessity exists, there is no such thing as virtue, no such thing as crime; all our actions are indifferent; all our miseries inconsolable; praise, blame, shame, honesty, laws, all are but empty sound, signifying nothing."* "There is no essential cause for an evil will," says St. Augustine, "but only a deficient cause—the want of a right will, as in avarice, and luxury, and vain-glory, where there is merely a want of a just preference of what is infinitely more valuable, more beautiful, and more noble, that what is chosen."† The Gentile philosopher observed, that the fountain and head of miseries, and the root of all evils, was a conviction that no disease of the mind was voluntary, and a matter of opinion or choice,‡ the groundlessness of which, Virgil shows in those four words :

"Possunt, quia posse videntur."§

During the middle ages, the error which denies the freedom of the human will, nearly disappears; and it was reserved for the sophists of Geneva, in the sixteenth century, to exhibit to the world, in his own person, and not without occasional indications of the interior horror consequent on such a combination, a legist and a fatalist as a reformer of philosophy. The errors attributed to the unhappy Gottschalk, of Fulda, in the ninth century, may have partly arisen from the calamities of his own life, to which Staudenmaier, with great probability, ascribes them.|| No sooner had he disclosed his sentiments on predestination, while on a visit to Count Eberhard of Frioul, than the scandal spread far and near. Raban Maur, then Archbishop of Mayence, wrote immediately against them, summoned a synod in 848 to condemn them, called upon Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, his metropolitan, to take measures to prevent him from infusing such noxious doctrine into the minds of the Christian people, and exposed the practical and fatal evils that

would result from such an opinion in a letter to that prelate, who, as far as the cause of truth was concerned, must be acknowledged to have written with ability and justice.* Against the errors to which this question gave birth, Florus, the deacon, apologizes for writing; observing that, "they are easily disproved, with God's assistance, and even shown worthy of laughter and scorn by the faithful, who are exercised in sacred reading, since they are most vain, and against faith, and full of manifest falsehood."† The works of Prudentius, of Troyes, of Lupus, Abbot of Ferrieres, of Ratramnus, monk of Corby, and of Amolon, Archbishop of Lyons, originating in this controversy, were all distinguished by vast erudition and profound philosophy. Finally, the Catholic doctrine on free-will and the blood of Christ, shed for all men, was confined and decreed by Pope Nicholas the First, in the year 859. Even the philosophic writers of the fifteenth century most addicted to subtle speculations respecting faith, such as Cardan,‡ and Marsilius Ficinus, leave the will free; the latter besides composing a treatise in defence of free-will, declaring repeatedly in his letters that nothing is more voluntary than goodness.§ In practice, we can only trace the contrary opinion in a few detached episodes, of which Torquemada, the Spaniard, furnishes an example in the following narrative: "One evening," saith he, "as I was walking with some gentlemen in the fields, adjoining a certain great city of this kingdom, we saw in a valley three men preparing a wheel for the execution of some criminal, which was to take place on the following day. 'There,' said one of my companions, 'is the executioner, a young man who it is said is a good grammarian, and of gentle manners.' I was greatly astonished to hear this. So, upon coming to the place, I looked narrowly at the young man, who was of a pleasing mien, and seemed not more than twenty-one years of age. I asked him if he was the executioner, and he said that he was. I asked him in Latin if he had studied, and he replied with elegance, in the same language, that he had; and I asked him of what country he was, and he replied, 'Since you know me to be the executioner, you ought not to ask me my

* Hom. V.

† De Civit. Dei, Lib. XII. 8, 9.

‡ Tuscul. IV. § Æneid. V. 231.

|| Johan. Scot. Erig. I. 175.

* Hincmar de Prædestin.

† Mauguin Vind. Præd. Tom. I. 585.

‡ Hieron. Card. de Libris Propriis.

§ Marsil. Ficin. Epist. Lib. I.

country.' 'But how then,' I continued, 'can you have undertaken such an office as this? Certainly, you are very guilty in this respect, since God has given you grace, and the disposition and ability to do good, and yet you do not employ his gifts as you ought.' After hearing me with attention, he replied, 'Sir, my fate would have it so: I cannot resist my fate.' Then perceiving his grand error and ignorance, I began a long discourse, showed him that there was no such thing as fate, that men had free-will, and might do what they chose, that they had no right to lay the blame on fate, but on themselves, when they chose an evil instead of a good way; in fine, he listened to me eagerly, and let fall a shower of tears to my great surprise; and he said, 'My misfortune has proceeded from my having had hitherto this bandage over my eyes. Since it is so, I will take another course, and not dishonour my family; for you must know, that I am of a noble family, and that I have been lost through gambling, which has reduced me to this state; but I give thanks to God, that no one hitherto has discovered me, for my country is far from here. I shall change my life, and endeavour to follow your good advice;' and as he never ceased to weep, he returned home with me to my house, and passed the whole night there in sighs and tears, and at break of day he departed, and I saw him no more; but from what I observed in him, I have great hopes that he did what he promised.*

The writers of the middle ages generally treat the opinion of the fatalists as an error exploded, which the mere view of a sower who sows grain in the fields can disperse. "Among all the goods of creation," says Richard of St. Victor, "there is nothing more sublime, nothing more worthy, than free-will, according to which man is made in the image of God."† "In this," he says, "the rational creature has an excellent dignity, that he serves his Creator voluntarily, not from compulsion."‡ In fact, the whole discipline and philosophy of the Catholic Church depended upon this doctrine. Hear again Richard: "Man presumes to mitigate the anger of the omnipotent God, and prevails, when the sentence hath gone forth, and man offers

himself to death, and imposes an end on necessity. To such a height of audacity does the consummation of charity exalt the mind of man. Behold how it makes man presume beyond man, by making him presume in God."* The living morality of the Catholic states was opposed also to that systematic sloth under the mask of prudence and moderation, by which eventually the spirit of the obligation itself is sacrificed, notwithstanding the continued profession of respect for the duty which it was intended to enforce; for by always resting satisfied with keeping within the law, the limits are at length so encroached upon, that men may have passed beyond unawares, the little which was to be observed, being performed with indifference, and perhaps reduced to a mere nominal compliance, till by degrees all is renounced, all forgotten, and men relapse to the manners of a Gentile sensuality. Milton feelingly deploras the moral condition of his contemporaries, after the vital principle of Catholicism had been lost. There were heard, indeed, on all sides, many pompous eulogies of virtue, and much boast of morality and reformation, but what was the fact? "Custom," said he, "still is silently received for the best instructor; filling each estate of life and profession with abject and servile principles, depressing the high and heaven-born spirit of man far beneath the condition wherein either God created him, or sin hath sunk him." Such was not the custom of the middle ages; no one feared the reproach of singularity or fanaticism, when realizing in his actions the type of moral grandeur, which was in his heart. The number was not then so great of those, who, as Cicero says of Pisa, crept to honours by the error of men, and by the recommendation of smoky images, which they resembled only in colour; but men, endowed with faith, did oft attain in lowest poverty to highest deeds. Sloth was known as one of the seven sins that consign the soul to death; and sloth, according to the authors of the middle age, was a laziness of mind, neglecting to begin or prosecute good things. This, in fact, connected with the prodigious activity of the evil principle, is the great disease of our nature, to which the church alludes in that affecting reproach which she puts into the mouth of the divine Jesus, "Una hora non

* Hexameron, 354.

† Richardi S. Vict. de Statu Interioris Hominis, I. 1. c. 3.

‡ Id. Super Apocalypsim. Lib. V. c. 9.

* De Gradibus Violentæ Charitatis.

potuistis vigilare mecum? Vel Judam non videtis, quoniam non dormit, sed festinat tradere me Judæis?" It is to rouse men from this apathy that the Catholic mysteries are intended, for while it predominates all hopes are vain; so great is its effects that the sacred Scripture says, in *imagine pertransit homo*. You may look upon us a thousand times, and you will never see us, rise up and walk. We are but poor painted images; we seem to wish every moment to rise and stand on our feet, but we do not rise or stand. All justice is outraged, the children of God are hunted down and slain like wolves, in order that a remorseless band may seize the asylums which faith had constructed for them. We are called upon to rise, that is, to raise a voice in their behalf—but we rise not, we sit in silence—in *imagine pertransit homo*.

It would be too far to venture from our path were I to point out how the course of human history bears witness to the decay of the vivifying principle of Catholic morals; but we can behold the effects displayed in a remarkable manner from any point, so that they will be visible if we only regard the material monuments on which I before treated, as having been the work of faith. For observe, it is in the sixteenth century that nearly all the great works of Christian zeal, as those of architecture, stop short. It is then that so many great undertakings are interrupted, to be no more resumed. The grandest cathedrals remain half-finished, one with its choir only erected, another with merely its nave, others without a front or a spire, sublime fragments, at the sight of which one asks, how came to disappear, all of a sudden, this giant race of masons and sculptors? How came there to be no more great foundations for the spiritual and material wants of society? It is that faith then grew weak; men began to protest and to doubt: to have no longer a perfectly-formed will, to have no strength to begin or to prosecute good things; or in other words, it was then that the custom of which Milton spoke, became fixed and naturalized among the races of men that had been for so many centuries before in honour, and with an intimate conviction of their dignity. And who, therefore, now can trace any spirit of life within the vast organization of the ancient society, where the principle of its existence has been withdrawn? On the seats of their ancestors the moderns appear, like the Roman

college of Augurs in the time of Dionysius, who describes them as so cleaving to the ancient form, that when magistrates were to be elected, the candidates, having prayed in the open air at dawn of day, some one of the augurs used to declare that there was lightning on the left hand, though none appeared, and adding, that this confirmed the election.* During the middle ages, these dry bones that we see around were living, for into all the institutions and manners of catholicism, there was infused a spirit, and no such dead empty forms, phantoms, without nerves or flesh, were ever beheld in a Christian state.

We have seen that the Catholic morality, synonymous with a determined will, depended for its strength and influence upon grace; it remains only to observe what was its principle and motive.

St. Augustin says, that men begin often by only fearing eternal punishment, and so abstaining from sin. "*Timent quidem*," he continues, "*sed non amant justitiam, cum autem per timorem continent se a peccato fit consuetudo justitiæ, et incipit quod durum erat amari, et dulcescit Deus.*"† This is the state of initial love. Servilely servile fear, according to theologians, was what restrains a man from sin who retains the wish to sin, if eternal punishment were not awarded against sin. This fear was held to be an additional sin; but servile fear, recommended by Christ, is that of a man restrained by fear, who does not speculate what he would do if there were no punishment for sin. This fear is called by St. Ambrose "the key of a fluctuating soul," and by St. Gregory, "an anchor of the mind." The spirit of the middle ages harmonized with the condescension of Divine justice; but it rose above the limits which were prescribed. "The compunction of fear has bitterness," says Richard of St. Victor, "the compunction of love sweetness; he who is only affected by fear, feeds, indeed, on spiritual, though not on sweet food; but he who from the desire of eternal joy, pours forth tears, is refreshed with food both sweet and spiritual."‡ The angel struck Peter, saying, "*surge veliciter*," and the chains fell from his hands without any effort or violence. "The cause," says Nieremberg, "was because the light shone upon him; for he who is enlightened by

* Dion. Halicarnass. Antiquit. Roman. Lib. II. cap. 6. + In Ps. cxxvii.

† Richardi S. Vict. de Contemplatione, II. 17.

the light of truth, has no occasion to offer violence to himself to conquer his evil passions. Sweet is this mode of victory by the practical knowledge of truth."* As Richard of St. Victor says, "love generates knowledge, and puts an end to sins, through a fear of offending him who is its object."† But this chapter has already exceeded the due limits. Let us hear the conclusion which Novalis, a disciple of the moderns, drew from a survey of the whole subject, and then we may pass on. "Practical, living Christianity," says this profound thinker, "was the old Catholic faith, which was a belief in Christ, in his mother, and in the saints. Its constant presence in life, its love for art, its deep humanity, the indissolubleness of its marriage, its benevolent communicativeness, its joy in humility, obedience, and truth, attest clearly and indubitably the existence of the genuine spirit of religion."‡ A remarkable testimony, that at any period might well claim the deep attention of all who wandered with its author from the way of authority, but which assumes a still greater degree of interest when we observe that now, after men have had

an interval of more than three hundred years for constructing a different system, the standard work upon morals of the nation which is looked up to as the most enlightened upon earth, is pronounced by judges of the highest capacity to rest upon a defective principle, and to be mischievous in its practical consequences. "I think," says an illustrious professor, in his discourse on the studies of the university in which that work is received as classical, and which justly boasts of him as its brightest ornament, "that to reject the moral sense is to destroy the foundation of all moral philosophy: that the rule of expediency, as stated by Paley, is based in false reasoning on the attributes of God; that the rule itself is ill suited to the capacity of men; that it is opposed to the true spirit of the Christian religion; that however honestly it may be accepted, it tends inevitably to lower the standard of what is right and good; and lastly, that wherever the utilitarian system is carried, through the influence of popular writings into practical effect, it will be found to end in results most pestilent to the honour and happiness of man."*

CHAPTER XII.

THE objection to the morality of the Catholic church, on the supposed ground of its incompatibility with the doctrine of a divine atonement, has played too great a part in history to be passed over in silence; though otherwise as philosophers, men would have but little to say respecting it, philosophers not having to reason against phantoms; but, as an historian of the middle ages, one cannot omit examining an objection which involves not merely a prodigious error, but also a flagrant misrepresentation of past times. If here again I should seem to enter far upon theological ground, the reader cannot, with reason, consider me as a trespasser, for the

question of grace involves the whole history of the sixteenth century. If an historian can be only a geographer in some ages, in others he must be a theologian. It has been justly remarked by Michelet, that Robertson's history is the most obscure and unsatisfactory of all books, precisely because events are not presented in it from this elevated point of view; for without investigating the theological question, it is impossible to understand the events of that time, whereas the great work on the variations by Bossuet, may be justly considered as being, perhaps, the very best history in the French language.

"Domine, memorabor justitiæ tuæ solius." You find in these words, reader, no contradiction to the line of argument hitherto pursued in this review of history; for

* P. Nieremberg, *Doct. Ascet. Lib.* II. 6. 39.

† Richardi S. Vict. in *Cantica Canticorum*, c. 41.

‡ *Schriften*, II. 333.

* Sedgwick's *Discourse on the Studies of the University*, p. 80.

you are aware that in commemorating the deeds of just men during ages of faith, we have but recorded and magnified, as the language of those times proclaimed, the acts of God. "Man has nothing but what he has received," to use the words of Richard of St. Victor, "and he can do nothing unless by him from whom he received it. Some things, indeed, he can do by nature, and some by grace; for the goods of nature are one thing, and those of grace are another. Nevertheless, it is certain that both are of grace, for nature itself is of grace: the first, therefore, are goods from grace preceding, and the second are goods from subsequent grace."* This was an early lesson given to men. "Nullus apud te per se innocens," said Moses,† and the words of Job expressed a traditionary as well as a personal wisdom, when he said that no man is justified before God. "Nay, whoever compares himself to the Author of good," says Pope St. Gregory the great, in his morals, commenting upon Job's words, "deprives himself of the good which he had received, for he who arrogates to himself the good which he hath received, fights against God with his own gifts; therefore he who lifteth himself up is justly destroyed."‡ That God of sovereign grace was pleased to impart his gifts to the redeemed race, and then to crown them, was indeed of faith, if so evident a truth could be so termed. "Qui creavit te sine te, non justificabit te sine te," was the saying of St. Augustin. St. Paul said that he had fought the good fight, and that henceforth there was a crown laid up for him, which was a consummation sought by all who heard the church, the ground of whose hope is thus stated by Dante—

—"For do not doubt
But to receive the grace which heaven vouchsafes
Is meritorious, even as the soul
With prompt affection welcometh the guest."§

"Are there no merits of the just?" asks St. Augustin. "There are certainly," he replies, "because they are just; but that they should become just there were no merits."|| The religious innovators affirmed, that they had restored to men the knowledge of justification and atonement, but nothing could surpass the extravagance of such an assertion, though many of them certainly made it in sincerity;—strange and wholly

inexplicable delusion, which must be referred to some unsearchable counsels of Divine Providence! The whole history and philosophy of the Catholic church, proclaim that upon that doctrine the human race had been established uninterruptedly from the first dawn of the blessed light which had announced to sinners the mystery of their redemption. It will be better not to treat this subject with a view to the dogmatical errors of those who separated themselves—such works as Mohler's Symbolik are at every one's command—but merely to show the constant tenor of Catholic instruction respecting it; although an historian cannot be dispensed from briefly alluding to them, in order to show how heresy played the unwitting handmaid to those who entered through the breach of Christendom, to use the expression of Æschylus, with an atheist foot: ἀθέῳ ποδὶ,* beholding in dismay the fearful desolation, though still obstinate in its alliance. The change was full of terror for all, but rebellious men preferred it to a palinode. "Lord, doctor," said Luther's wife, on one occasion, "how comes it that under the papacy men used to pray so fervently and long, whereas now they pray so seldom and with such coldness?" "Doubtless," replied her husband, "the demon prompted them to practice religion, in order that they might trust in their works." Burton, after describing the hardheartedness of his contemporaries, and their insensibility to the sufferings of the poor, proceeds thus: "Tell the rich man that the poor are starving, remind him that they are his brethren; he passes on his way: if thou canst thunder upon him as papists do with satisfactions and meritorious works, or persuade him by these means he shall save his soul out of hell, and free it from purgatory, then, in all likelihood, he will listen and stay."† Nothing could restrain their reckless deduction of consequences from the doctrine of their teachers. "In this age," says Fuller, "we begin to think meanly of the Lord's Prayer. Some will not forgive it for that passage 'as we forgive them that trespass against us.'" The insane opinions, the truly factious opposition, to use a modern phrase of these men, introduced, it is true, infinite disorder into the social state, which our ancestors had abundant reason to deplore for their own sakes, for their country's peace, and for the cause of God's honour; but though Luther and his peers had the presumption to deny the merit of good works, which error formed the

* Richardi S. Vict. de Statu Interioris Hominis, I. 20. † Exod. xxxiv.

‡ S. Greg. Moral. Lib. IX. cap. 2.

§ Parad. XXIX.

|| S. August. Epist. CV. ad Sixtum.

* Eumenid. 540.

† Book III.

fatal breach, the deposit of faith was too securely guarded to admit of Catholics, "on that account, flying to the opposite extreme, so as to refrain from relying for salvation on the merits of Christ, as all just men had done before them."* The theological question, purely such, was indeed for ever set at rest by the celebrated canon of the council of Trent on justification, as it had been dogmatically determined long before by the successive decrees promulgated in different ages, which may be seen in the collection made by Ives de Chartres.† To determine it, however in relation to history, which is the point that concerns us, let us hear the great voice of Catholic tradition, transmitted through the writings of the fathers, of the scholastic and mystic authors of the middle ages, and through the liturgy and offices of the church. Who could estimate the depths of the mysteries of faith! They taught that there are spirits and intelligences for ever lost, and left without redemption: that there are others of human kind, to whom not only redemption is possible, but even a degree of glory promised beyond what they would have enjoyed if they had never fallen. The Master of the Sentences supposes that as Satan had sinned without any temptation or seducer from without, therefore his sin was irremediable; but that, as the sin of man was, as it were, occasioned by another, so by another he hath a remedy.‡ Of this whole subject it was deemed enough to say, in the words of St. Augustin, respecting original sin, than this "nihil est ad prædicandum notius, nihil ad intelligendum secretius."§

"From the beginning of the world," says Hugo of St. Victor, "there were Christians, if not in name, in fact. There are three kinds of men—men of the natural law, men of the written law, and men of grace. From the beginning till the end of the world, there will never have been any one justified unless by grace, and grace will never have been gained unless by Christ."||

You have heard the theologian, now hear the poet of the middle ages; he speaks of paradise and says,

"None ever hath ascended to this realm,
Who hath not a believer been in Christ,

* Principles of the Christian Religion, by the Rev. Lewis Brittain, regent of the English college at Bornhem.

† Ivo[n]is Carnotens. Decret. Pars XVII.

‡ Lib. II. Distinct. 21.

§ De Moribus Eccles. Cath. cap. 22.

|| Hugo de St. Vict. de Sacramentis, Lib. I. Pars. VII.

Either before or after the blest limbs
Were nailed upon the wood. But lo! of those
Who call Christ, Christ, there shall be many
found

In judgment, farther off from him by far
Than such to whom his name was never
known."*

All this is expressed in sublime brevity by the author of the *Quadriregio*, describing Christ's descent into Limbo, when he says,

—"As down the cavern streamed
The radiance: "Light," said Adam, "this, that
breathed
First on me, thou art come, expected Lord!"

Let us, finally, hear the preacher of the fifth age, whom some suppose to be St. Cæsarius, announcing the same doctrine on Easter Sunday. "Behold, you have heard what our defender the Lord of vengeance hath done of his own accord. When like a conqueror, brilliant and terrible, he entered the regions of the kingdom of darkness, at his sight, the impious legions of hell, terrified and trembling, began to inquire of each other, saying, 'Who is this fearful comer, resplendent with the whiteness of snow? Our Tartarus hath never beheld his fellow. The world hath never vomited into our cavern any one like him. It is an invader, not a debtor. He requires, he demands not; we behold a judge, not a suppliant. He cometh to order, not to obey; to plunder, not to remain. Did our warders sleep, when this conqueror attacked our gates? If he were a sinner, he would not be so powerful; if any impurity attached to him, he would not lighten our hell with such a lustre. If he be God, wherefore is he come? If man, how did he dare to come? If God, what doth he in the grave? If man, why doth he deliver sinners? Whence comes he, so bright, so strong, so wondrous, so terrible? Who is he to have passed our frontiers with such intrepidity, and not only to fear not our punishment, but to deliver others from our chains? May it not be him of whom our prince hath lately said, that by his death we should receive the empire of the world! But if it be him, the hope of our prince has been frustrated; where he thought to conquer he hath been conquered and overthrown. O, our prince! what hast thou done, what hast thou wished to do? Behold him, who with a light supreme hath dissipated thy darkness! burst thy dungeons, broken thy chains, delivered thy

• Parad. XIX.

captives, and changed their mourning into joy! See how those who were accustomed to groan beneath our torments, now insult us on account of the salvation which they have received; and not only no longer fear us, but threaten us! Who hath ever before seen the dead triumphing and the captives filled with joy?"

"Fundamentum est justitiæ fides," says St. Ambrose;* and St. Augustin expresses the doctrine of the church thus, "Christ was made sin that we might become justice, not having our own justice but that which comes from God, not in ourselves but in Christ."† As it was, however, chiefly against the doctrine and practice of the middle ages that the objection was directed, let us pass on at once, without multiplying sentences from the holy fathers, to the testimony of a later time. Hear, then, an ascetic author of universal renown, during the ages so vehemently accused. "Domine Deus meus," cries Thomas à Kempis, "in misericordia tua stant omnia opera mea: et nulla sunt propria merita, nisi adsit tua pietas et miseratio immensa. Et hæc est spes mea, et tota fiducia mea."‡ Again, hear Lewis of Grenada, the celebrated Spanish Dominican. "The merit of the blessed John the Evangelist," saith he, "was certainly great and eminent; but in the greatest gifts of God, it is safest to refer all things to his immense grace, from which every benefit flows."§

"You should understand," he says, in his discourse, on the invention of the holy cross, "that all the gifts of grace, and all the unction of the Holy Spirit, are conferred upon us for the sake and merits of our crucified Lord. He vouchsafes us the grace by which we rise from sin; therefore, if we rise from sin, we rise by his merits. If we retain justice unto the end, we retain it by his merits. If we overcome the temptations of the ancient enemy, we overcome by his merits. If we perform any good work, we perform it by his merits. If we are kindled by a pious desire, we are kindled by his merits. If we are not shaken by any thunder of adverse things, nor puffed up by prosperity, it is owing to his merits. This Cross made the apostles conquerors of the world, strengthened the martyrs in their trials, instructed confessors with celestial precepts, illuminated doctors, constituted the purity of virgins, filled the desert with

choirs of monks, and renewed the perishing world. This was the wisdom of the little ones, the light of those that sat in darkness, the strength of the combatants, and the crown of those that conquered."¶

Hear now Lewis of Blois. "Let every one, when about to die, trust in the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ rather than in his own. Let him confide in His goodness, and in the prayers of the blessed Virgin Mary, and in the saints and elect of God. Let him propose to himself the bitter passion and death of Christ. Let him call to memory that ineffable charity which impelled him to sustain such unworthy things. Let him lose and submerge himself, with all his sins and negligences, in the profound sea of his immense mercy; and from pure love, with a perfect resignation, offer himself to the glory of God as a living host to the Lord."†

That all hope of salvation was to be placed in the merits of Christ, is shown in his canon of the spiritual life.‡ "All our works and exercises," he says in another work, "must be offered to God, by his only son, to the eternal praise of his name; for things which are of themselves obscure or less bright, acquire an ineffable splendour and beauty from the merits of Christ, with which they are joined and united."§

St. Catherine of Sienna shows that no human works can either satisfy for sin or deserve reward, without the affection of charity, and the application of the blood of Christ. "Knowest thou not, O daughter, that all the pains which the soul can sustain in this life, are not sufficient to punish the least fault, since an offence against the infinite good, requires an infinite satisfaction; and, therefore, not all the sufferings in this world are satisfactory but corrective. Nevertheless, true contrition is satisfactory, by means not of the suffering but of the infinite desire; and, therefore, the works of penance, though finite and done in time, may have an infinite merit, where the virtue was performed with infinite desire, and the penalty endured with true contrition."|| This most holy contemplatist ascribes the knowledge of Jesus Christ in the soul, to its having been previously washed in his precious blood."¶¶

* Ludovic. Grenatens. In Inventione Crucis. Concio I.

† Ludovic. Blois. Consol. Psallan. ‡ Cap. 37.

§ Ludovic. Blois. Enchirid. Parvulorum, Lib. I. Doc. III. ap. 9.

|| S. Cath. Senensis Dialog. Tract. I. cap. 3.

¶ Id. cap. 4.

* Lib. Off. I. c. 28. † Enchiridion, c. 12.

‡ Thom. à Kemp. Soliloquium, cap. 7.

§ Ludovic. Grenatens. In Festo B. Joan. Evang. Concio III.

Henry Suso says, "Others may console themselves in the innocence of their lives, or in their great exercises and labours, but I have all my hope and consolation placed and laid up in the passion of Jesus Christ, in his satisfaction, and expiation, and merits."* John Lanspergius, the Carthusian, leaves us to infer that this doctrine was universally accepted, for he begins with "Since one drop of the blood of Christ has more value and satisfaction than all human merits."†

"It is with a perpetual thirst," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "that we must do justice, which implies that we are never sufficiently just. The just man never says it is enough, but always esteems himself an unprofitable servant. The prophet saith, 'Sperantem in Domino misericordia circumdabit;' he does not say, hoping in his merits, but hoping in the Lord."‡

"How happy," cries father John de Avila, the celebrated Spanish preacher, "is the man who founds his all upon Jesus Christ, living to him and for him."§ "Remember," he says, writing to a certain nobleman, "that the confidence and consolation of Christians who wished to be saved, must not be founded on their own strength or on their own works only, but on the grace which is given to us in the works and merits of Jesus Christ; who by his infinite goodness, has willed to communicate them to all who by faith and penitence are subject to him; and this it is which alone can give us assurance and peace."|| "The Son of God," says Dom Calmet, "is the surety and the mediator of all the alliances between God and men. They are only made in view and in virtue of the great and divine alliance which he has made with our nature in his incarnation."¶

The testimony of the more ancient writers is no less express and concurrent. "It is by Jesus Christ," says the Angel of the School, "that heavenly gifts and graces come to us from God: it is by Jesus Christ that we should render him our thanksgiving, in order that he may be in all things and by all things mediator between God and man." The writings of St. Bernard and of Pope Innocent the Second addressed to Abailard, are equally explicit, reminding men, as the author of the Imitation of

Christ says, that they should never think themselves to be of any merit on account of good works.* "What ought a Christian to study and to know, unless that in which consists all his good, all his treasure, and all his riches? What is this treasure of man, unless his merit? 'Ergo, postquam in morte Christi est omne meritum hominis, sequitur quod totus thesaurus hominis est morte Christi. Qui vult ergo in se habere omnem virtutem et omne meritum et omne bonum, recipiat in se Christi mortem et passionem, et portet eam in se, et incorporet eam sibi.'" These are the words of Raimund de Sabundus in his Natural Theology, cited by Cardinal Bona, as containing the proper subject of daily meditation at the office of Nones.†

"I live in the faith of the Son of God, 'qui dilexit me et tradidit semet ipsum pro me,'" are the words of the apostle, from which an ancient ascetic concludes that every man should regard the cross of Jesus, as if there had been no one else in the world but himself who had sinned, and that he had died for him alone.‡ "It is on the death of Jesus Christ that all my hopes are founded," says the unknown writer of the middle ages, who composed the manual ascribed to St. Augustin. "The death of Jesus Christ is my refuge and the source of my merits."§ Speaking of the perfection of the graces of Christ, St. Bonaventura says, "This fulness of grace as from the head flows down into all who approach to him by a right faith, or by the sacraments of faith, whether they proceeded his advent or followed after it: Christ having in himself the superabundance of grace, bestows the benefit of this grace upon those who come to him."|| "The mystery of our justification," he says elsewhere, "is signified in the work of the fourth day of the Creation, in which God made the sun and the moon, and the stars; for in the work of justification, we see the stars of virtue shining in the heart of the justified, which derive their light from the sun of justice."¶ "Have this for a general rule," he says, "whenever you wish to render God propitious to you, carry in your heart the wounds of Christ, and present yourself to the Eternal Father as if sprinkled with the blood of his only Son, and he

* Ludovic. Blos. Consolat. Pusil. + Id.

† S. Ber. Senens. Tom. III. de Beat.

‡ Epist. Part II. 13.

§ Id. II. Epist. 52.

¶ Calmet sur le v. 13 du Chap. IX. de la Genèse.

* De Imit. Lib. III. c. 4.

+ De Divin. Psal. cxvii.

† P. Joan. à Jesu Maria, Instruct. Novitiorum, III. cap. 2.

§ Manuel, cap. 22.

|| S. Bonavent. Centiloqui, Pars III. § 28.

¶ De Reformat. Hom. Exter. cap. 64.

will have mercy on you."* Mark now how this doctrine was carried into practical effect. St. John of the Cross was a celestial man, who appeared on the earth like an incarnate seraphim; he performed actions of a perfect disinterestedness, and of an almost consummate holiness. Nevertheless he refused to recognise one action of his life which did not give him cause for fear.† When dying, in the convent of Ubede, the father provincial, seeking to console him by reminding him of his great services to religion, the holy man replied, "I pray your reverence to speak of nothing but my sins, for I recal them now to mind, and I know that I have nothing to offer for their satisfaction but the merits of Jesus Christ."‡

To cut short this present debate, the objectors can be securely challenged to produce the life of one saint of the Catholic Church, of whom it is not even expressly recorded, when any details are to be expected, as it is of the venerable mother De Chantal, foundress of the order of the Visitation, that all their hope was founded upon the infinite mercy of God, and on the merits of Jesus Christ.§ Justinian Bergomao was a holy hermit of Camaldoli, who from the desert wrote against Martin Luther. So dear to him were the lives of the fathers, that he used to express his wish that the volume which contained them might be buried with him in his grave. When dying, he was exhorted, by some who stood near, to take courage, to whom he answered, "Fathers, though not trusting in my own merits, but in the mercy of the Most High, be assured that I expect death as a virgin awaits her spouse."|| But even if we were left in ignorance of what these men believed and performed, if we knew nothing of their lives or of their deaths, still no other conclusion is possible as to the historical fact, after we have heard the prayers of the church and observed the principle of all her mysteries. In the treatise on the mass by Cardinal Bona, you will see how the mind of the priest is wholly bent upon the desire of being immersed in the abyss of the merits of Christ.¶ Those who assisted at the Eucharistic sacrifice, and those who offered it up to the Eternal Father, knew

from the Church that, as Cardinal Bona says, no disposition, of theirs, no industry, no virtue, but alone the grace of God, rendered them worthy.* "The church knows," says Pope Benedict the Fourteenth, in his treatise *De Sacrificio Missæ*,† explaining the words of the daily prayer, "non meritorum inspector, sed *veniæ largitor*," that God vouchsafes beatitude only through interceding merits, and that grace and pardon of sins are necessary for all who are admitted into the company of the saints, which without our meriting, are given only by Christ our Lord, our own merits being nothing but the gift of God's mercy and grace." If the church invites her children to perform the works of penance, it is her prayer that "as they depend solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended by heavenly protection."‡ If she commemorates their having received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, it is her prayer that "God would mercifully accomplish what he has granted to them, without any merit on their side."§ If she hails the coming of the Just One, she beseeches God to be appeased by the prayers and victims of their humility, and since they have no merits to plead, to assist them by his protection through their Lord Jesus Christ.|| At the end of every prayer she adds, that it is offered through Christ. "Non enim," as Durandus saith, explaining this usage, "per aliam viam ad nos æterna Dei beneficia possunt decurrere, quam per eum qui est Mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus."¶

In the very offices which are accused of militating against this tradition of faith, she finds occasion to express how deeply it has influenced her views of the divine law; for if she wishes men to believe according to the judgment of the subtle Scot, who deserved and obtained that title for his profound argument on that very question, that the soul of the blessed virgin, at the first instant of its creation and infusion into her body, was preserved from the stain of original sin, her doctors teach that this was through the special grace and privilege of God, by the intuition of the merits of Jesus Christ.** Finally, in commemorating the passion of the holy martyrs, she holds that their intercession and merits can only

* S. Bonavent. *Stim. Div. Amor. Pars III. 12.*

† Dosithée, *Vie de S. Jean de la Croix*, Liv. VI. ‡ *Id. Liv. VIII.*

§ Marsoller, *Vie de Madame de Chantal*, Lib. II. p. 220. 354.

|| *Annales Camaldulens. Lib. LXXIII.*

¶ *De Missa Tractat. Ascet. c. V. 7.*

* *De Missa Tractat. Ascet. cap. 2, 3.*

† I. 301. ‡ *Coll. Sabbat. II. Hebdom. Lent.*

§ *Secret. Twenty-third Sund. after Pentecost.*

|| *Secret. Second Sund. in Advent.*

¶ *Durandi Rationale, cap. 15. Lib. IV.*

** *Sardagna Theologia, Tom. IV. 64.*

avail through the mystery of Christ's atonement, as may be witnessed in what she sings on the festival of S. Clement, Pope, and martyr.—Non meis meritis ad vos me misit Dominus, vestris coronis participem fieri. The religious institutions also of the middle age, not only implied the acceptance of this doctrine, but were wholly and expressly dependant on it. The life of monks could have had no beginning if the sacrifice on Calvary had not been consummated. "Whoever aspires to the monastic life," says Albert the Great, "must, as if with closed eyes and senses, refrain from entangling and disturbing himself with any creature; he must retire wholly unto himself, and regard no other object but only Jesus Christ wounded."* To the testimony of holy theologians, thus borne out by the language of the church, and the object of her institutions, the evidence of history, however, is not confined. It shows further, how the general sense of the people, and the belief of the laity, corresponded with the doctrine, which had been divinely transmitted to them. Lo! what is this goodly train which passes before us? Who is this that rides in such state, armed, though in times of peace, in complete steel, having at his saddle bow a helmet, and over his mail a coat, presenting before and behind a great cross, on which is written, O how merciful is God! followed by a stately company, all of whom bear crosses similarly embroidered? This is the just and wise Emperor Sigismund, whose zeal for the peace of the church has prompted him to enter France.† You perceive how this divine mystery is brought to your recollection, even amidst the pomp of secular triumphs.

In the instructions which were particularly addressed to the laity, we invariably find the utmost attention evinced to impress it upon them. Thus Iona lays down the fundamental principle of salvation through the atonement of Jesus Christ at the beginning of his work, *De Institutione Laicali*, which was dedicated to the count Malfredus, who was one of the first nobles of Gaul under the emperor Charles the Bald.‡

Among St. Anselm's questions to be proposed to a dying man we read as follows. If it be a layman, the question is, "Do you hope and believe that you may come to eternal salvation, not by your merits, but by the merits of the passion of Jesus Christ?"—Answer, Such is my hope. If

it be a monk, you are to ask him, "Credis quod Dominus Jesus Christus pro te mortuus est? Credo. Credis te non posse nisi per mortem ipsius salvari? Credo. Age ergo dum superest in te anima: in hac sola morte totam fiduciam tuam constitue: in nulla alia tu fiduciam habeas: huic morti te totum committe, hac solâ te totum contage: hac morte te totum involve: et si Dominus Deus voluerit te judicare, dic: Domine, mortem Domini nostri Jesu Christi obijcio inter me et judicium tuum; aliter non contendo tecum."* Thus speaks the father of the scholastic theology. Again, to history belongs the evidence which can be collected from such ancient documents as the testament of Margaret of Lorraine, wife of René, duke of Alençon. In this, after declaring that she recommends her soul to God her Creator and Redeemer, and to his blessed mother, to St. Michael, and to all the saints of Paradise, she adds, "in order that by the very merit of the dolorous passion of my Creator, and the prayers of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the blessed saints, I may live and die in the holy Catholic faith, and in the love and charity of God, my Saviour and Redeemer Jesus, in whom is my whole and final hope, and on whom depends the beginning and the end of all regular observance."† Similar evidence does history supply in recording the last words of king John of Arragon, in the year 1479. "He gazed upon the crucifix and said, 'O Creator of the world, omnipotent God, redeemer of men, spare me thy most unworthy servant. Mercy, O most clement Jesus, and turn away thy face from my sins, moved not by my merits, which, O Lord, are none, but by thy ineffable piety and infinite mercy.'"‡

The celebrated countess Mathilda expired with similar words.

"In cruce nam Christi sua figens oscula dixit:
Te colui semper, mea nunc rogo crimina terge.
Accipiens Christi Corpus venerabile dixit;
Semper dum vixi, Deus, hoc scis, spem tibi fixi;
Nunc in fine meo me salvans suscipe, queso."

Such was her confession; while the words of Donizo, her chaplain, after relating it, show how far were the wise and holy men of those days from expressing that presumptuous confidence which is now on every tongue when it is a question of a soul departing; for he adds,

* Albert. Mag. de adhaerendo Deo, cap. 2.

† Paravin, Hist. de Lyon. Lib. II. 92.

‡ Ione Aurelianens. Episcop. de Institut. Laicali, Lib. I. cap. 1.

* S. Anselmi Admonitio Morienti.

† Dacher. Spicilegium, Tom. V.

‡ Lucii Marinei Siculi de Rebus Hispaniæ, Lib. XVIII.

"Sic orans migrat mox hæc sapiens Comitissa:
 Quamquam credamus, Deus huic quoque ait mi-
 seratus.

Ipsam nemo tamen scit, qui non postulet alte
 Ut sibi concedat Paradisi gaudia vera."*

Reader, I am well pleased to have reserved for this place the letter of Angelo Politian to James Antiquarius, in which he relates the death of Lorenzo de Medicis; for though we reviewed in a former book the character of death in relation to blessed sorrow, the last words and actions of that great man were so imbued with the spirit of this divine doctrine, that the claim of the present argument to possess their evidence seems to outweigh every other. "Finding the moments critical, Lorenzo," saith he, "as a man always most cautious, had, as you may suppose, nothing more at heart than to send for the physician of souls, to whom he confessed, according to the Christian rite, all the faults of his life. I heard a person who was present say, that he never beheld any thing more incredible than the constancy of the man at his death, than the imperturbable serenity with which he called to mind the past, dispensed the present, and provided for the future. About midnight he was told that the priest was coming with the sacrament. 'Far be it from me,' he cried, 'far be it from me to suffer that my Jesus, who made me and redeemed me, should enter this bed-chamber. Raise me up, I implore you, raise me up, that I may be carried forth to meet my Lord;' and so raising himself up as well as he could, and sustaining the weakness of his body, by the force of his mind, between the arms of his servants he was borne into the hall, where sinking down on his knees and weeping, he spoke these words: 'Dost thou deign, O mild Jesu, to visit this thy most wicked servant: what do I say, servant? Nay, rather thy enemy, and indeed thy most ungrateful enemy, who hast so often offended thy majesty, notwithstanding so many benefits conferred upon him. O by that charity with which thou dost embrace the whole race of men, through which thou didst come down on earth, taking upon thyself our humanity; by that charity which compelled thee to suffer hunger and thirst, and cold, and heat, and labour, and scourgings, and contumely, and stripes and blows, and lastly, death and the cross; by that charity I implore thee, O Jesu, to turn away thy face from my sins, that when I shall stand before thy tribunal, to which I now feel myself cited, not my sins, but the merits of

thy cross may be recompensed. O may thy most precious blood, good Jesu, prevail in my cause, which thou didst shed to restore men to liberty upon that altar of our redemption.' After these words, which he pronounced weeping, while all that were present wept, the priest ordered him to be raised and placed upon his bed, that he might administer to him more conveniently, which he for a while refused to suffer, but in the end, rather than appear disobedient to his senior, he permitted it to be done, and then after similar words, he received the body and blood of the Lord. After a while he began to console his son Peter, who alone continued present, and gave him, as I heard, sage advice, and all that he said was full of singular wisdom and holiness. When I entered the room, he stretched out his feeble arms, saying, 'Ah, my Angelo;' then he caught and pressed closely both my hands. I endeavoured at first, turning my head aside, to conceal my tears and sobs, but finding it impossible, I threw myself into a recess of the chamber and gave the reins to my sorrow. I soon, however, resumed strength and returned, when he asked me where was John Picus of Mirandula? and I replied, that he had remained in the city fearing lest his presence should be troublesome; 'and,' said he, 'I ought to fear lest it might trouble him to come so far, and yet I would fain see and speak with him before I die.' So I sent messengers, and he came immediately. O good God, with what humanity, with what blandishments did he receive him! He asked his pardon for having sent for him, and told him that he did so through love, for that with his face, as with that of a most dear friend, he desired to satiate his dying eyes. Then for some time, he conversed familiarly, and even playfully, with us, saying that he wished he could have finished his library. When Jerome, the holy friar and preacher of celestial doctrine, entered and exhorted him to hold the faith, he replied, that he held it entire. As he was leaving the room, Lorenzo said, 'Stay, father, your benediction first;' and then with head bowed down, and a countenance full of religion, he received it. He repeated the responses with such composure, that you would suppose it was the others, and not Lorenzo who approached death. Such evenness of mind did he evince to the last, that when some one offering food, asked him how he liked it, 'as a dying man,' was his reply. Finally, embracing all with affection, and asking pardon of each if he had ever spoken a

* Vita Mathild. Lib. II.

harsh word to him during the pain of his sickness, he desired them to recite the prayers for the recommendation of a soul. At the Gospel relating the passion of Christ he repeated the words, at one time silently moving his lips, and at another raising up his weak eyes, and sometimes making signs with his fingers to express what he felt. At last the silver crucifix, magnificently adorned with gems and pearls, being placed before his eyes, looking on it and kissing it, he expired; a man born to the highest state, and who amidst the gusts and tides of fluctuating fortune, showed himself so moderate that it would be difficult to say, whether in prosperity he appeared more just, or in adversity more magnanimous. Of intelligence so acute and profound that he seemed to excel equally in all things, and of virtue so eminent that probity, justice, and faith, seem in the estimation of all men, to have chosen his breast for their dwelling-place and for their temple.*

Here is an admirable narrative, reader, but it only supplies an instance of the effects of the Catholic doctrine of justification, and we may recollect that all the examples of holy death in the middle ages recorded in a former book were similar. If we pass to the writings of the learned men who were most distinguished for their admiration of the ancient philosophy, we find this doctrine laid down with the utmost precision, as in the book of Marsilius Ficinus de Christiana Religione.† Nor is it unknown in the regions where the muses soar, for the Catholic poets took care that it should be proclaimed in solemn verse. Dante expressly introduces it into the seventh canto of his Paradise, where with theological accuracy it is stated and explained. "Man in himself, had ever lacked the means of satisfaction. Such is the lesson taught to him in the blissful seats, where are none who place obtained for merit of their own; and man had vainly tried out of his own sufficiency to pay the rigid debt: for justice every method else were all too scant, had not the Son of God humbled himself to put on mortal flesh."‡ Tasso in like manner alludes to it where he represents the hermit conversing with Rinaldo.

"My Lord," he said, "your travels wondrous are,
Far have you strayed, erred, wander'd far:

* Angelo Politian, Epist. Lib. IV.

† Cap. 20.

‡ Parad. VII. and XXXII.

Much are you bound to God above, who brought
You safe from false Armida's charmed hold;
Yet may'st thou not, polluted thus with sin,
In his high service war or fight begin:
The world, the flesh, with their infections vile
Pollute thy thoughts impure, thy spirit stain;
Not Po, not Ganges, not seven-mouthed Nile,
Not the wide seas can wash thee clean again:
Only to purge all faults which thee defile,
His blood hath power who for thy sins was
slain."*

In fine, even the material monuments of the middle ages would be sufficient to prove that the whole world had been imbued with the spirit of this divine doctrine of mercy-tempered justice which Rufinus supposes to have been known to the Egyptian priests and philosophers, who, in their hieroglyphics, by the figure of a cross expressed, he says, the hope of future salvation. Churches, palaces, thrones, sceptres, banners, panoplies, trophies, tombs, all would be unintelligible without this key. At the mention of tombs, reader, methinks I see you beckon to me as one who would say, here let us pause a while. It is true the ancient sepulchres, with their inscriptions and emblems, are most worthy of being examined if it were only from a consideration of the direct evidence which they furnish to the belief of men: well then let us examine a few, and confirm our annals by this testimony from the dead. The tombs of the unjust proclaim that the hope of their tenants was in their own virtue. The heretics of the middle ages, generally took care that posterity should be made acquainted with their merits. The emperor Frederick the Second, buried at Monte Reale, near Palermo, was commemorated on his tomb by his natural son, Manfred, in these terms:

"Si probitas, sensus, virtutis gratia, intellectus,
Nobilitas oris possent resistere morti,
Non foret extinctus Fredericus qui manet
intus."

No such style of fond sepulchral flattery is traced in Catholic epitaphs. Examine, for example, the marble tomb of Junius Bassus, which was found in the Vatican cemetery under the confessional of St. Peter in the year 1595, when the time-worn pavement was disturbed. On this is exquisitely carved many histories of the ancient and the new testament which all have relation to the redemption of man by the blood of Christ. The sacrifice of

Abraham, the brazen serpent, and the scape-goat, appear on many of the ancient, sarcophaguses found in the different cemeteries, which may be seen represented in any of the works which treat on subterraneous Rome. No one need be told what symbols are found in the cathedrals and other churches of the middle age. The brazen effigy of Heribert, archbishop of Milan, in the eleventh century, on his tomb which is in the church of St. Dionysius in that city, is placed at the foot of an image of the Saviour's cross. The epitaph ends with these lines :

"Nunc tumulor ævus servorum, Christe, tuorum :
Pro meritis horum, tibi digne complacitorum
Sanguine, quæso, tuo, mihi tu miserere redempto."

The old inscription on the tomb of Adelhard, founder of the cathedral of Ferrara, ended thus,—

"Per meritum Christi requiem deprecimur isti."†

Mark the ancient epitaph on the tomb of Raban Maur, in the monastery of St. Alban, in the chapel of St. Boniface at Mayence, in which his body was laid to rest after ruling the abbey of Fulda during twenty years, and the see of Mayence nine.

"Nunc ego te ex tumulo, frater dilecte, juvando
Commendes Christo me ut precibus Domino,
Judicis æterni me ut gratia salvet in ævum,
Non meritum aspiciens, sed pietatis opus:
Hraban nempe mihi nomen, cui lectio dulcis
Divinæ legis semper ubique fuit.
Cui Deus omnipotens tribuat cælestia regna
Et veram requiem semper in arce Poli."‡

Read now the epitaph on the tomb of Ratbod Frisius, a celebrated philosopher of the ninth century, and archbishop of Utrecht, composed by himself.

"Esuries te, Christe Deus, sitis atque videndi
Jam modo carnales me vetat esse dapes.
Da mihi te vesci, te potum haurire salutis,
Unicus ignotæ tu cibis esto visæ.
Et quem longa fames errantem ambesit in orbe,
Hunc satia vultu, Patris imago, tuo.

O Deus omnipotens, cujus pietate redemptus
Subsistit mundus, qua generatus homo,
Respice me miserum peccati mole gravatum
Et nimio pressum pondere, Christe, leva.
Ereptumque gregis dira de sorte ministri,
Judicis inter oves tempore siste tuas."§

* Italia Sacra, Tom. IV. 107.

† Id. Tom. I. 516.

‡ Historia Fuldensis, Pars III.

§ Bulæus, Histor. Universit. Parisiens. Tom. I.

Lastly, hear how the legist of Bologna, in the time of Frederick the First is commemorated.

"Transiit ut vivat mundanæ legis alumnus;
Mors sit ei requies, ultima vita Deus.
Urbis honor, mundi speculum, jacet hic Ugo-
linus:
Christus qui novit parcere, parcat ei."

But not merely tombs, all the material monuments of the middle ages bore witness to the universality of this faith, for no place was left without its symbol; and the cross would never have been the object most familiar to all eyes, exhibited continually under every possible variety of associations, if there had not been a knowledge of the doctrine which it signified. "He who places his trust in the mystery of the cross," says St. Basil, "may truly be said to have found the cross of our Lord with holy Helena;" "for," adds Louis of Grenada, "this is spiritually to find the cross of our Lord. For it would have been of no avail to find the wood of the cross unless we found also the mystery and philosophy of the cross, which consists in this hope and in this love."* Look back now through the tide of times, and hear Raban Maur teaching in verse and prose the theology of the holy cross.

"O crux, quæ summi es voto dedicata trophæo!
O crux, quæ Christi es claro benedicta triumpho!

Te Patriarcharum laudabilis actio signat,
Plebsque prophetarum divino flamine jussa,
Agmen Apostolicum pandit tua rite trophæa,
Martyrum et ipse chorus effuso jure cruore.
En arx alma crucis, en fabrica facta salutis,
En thorax hic regis, hæc conciliatio mundi.
Signa crucis Christi Seraphim cælestia mon-
strant,

Distantisque alis brachia tensa notant.
Crux sacra, tu æterni es Regis victoria Christi,
Est orbi toti Domini quoque passio vita.
In cruce lex Domini decoratur luce corusca,
Gentes et linguæ sociantur laude sacrata,
Crux æterna Dei laus, vivis in arce polorum.
Crux, superis placita es. Crux, hinc es navita
mundo,
Rabanum memet clemens rogo Christe tuere,
O pie judice."

"The passion of the cross," he continues, "sustains the heavens, rules the world, penetrates hell. By that the angels are confirmed, the people redeemed, the enemies overthrown: this the Author of all provided and constructed that in it he might restore all things and reunite all

* Ludovic. Granat. in Inventionem S. Crucis Concio, III.

things by Jesus Christ our Lord. O truly good and holy cross of Christ, who can rightly tell of thee or worthily recount thy praise! Thou art the pious discloser of celestial secrets, the sacred guardian of the mysteries of God, the fit dispenser of the sacraments of the church. On thee the angels gaze, accumulating their joys: from thee men learn the right of their salvation; in thee the inhabitants of hell perceive the just retribution of their fraud. Thou dost renew the past, illuminate the present, foreshow the future; thou dost seek what was lost, preserve what is found, restore the fallen, and direct them in the way of peace: thou art the victory of the eternal king, the joy of the celestial hosts, the strength of the inhabitants of earth; thou art remission of sins, and the way of the just; thou art the remedy of the sick, the help of the labourers, the refreshment of the weary; thou art the state of those that believe well, the security of those that work well, the habit of those that persevere well; and whatever worthily can be thought of the redemption of the world, whatever praise can be uttered by the tongues of men and angels, is properly applied to thy honour; for whatever is praised in thee is ascribed to Christ crucified. To thee, O Lord Jesu Christ, I offer humble prayers, that thou wouldst deign to inspire me, a sinner, so that I may sing the honour of thy holy cross, and preach to my fellow-servants the truth of our common salvation. Nor doth the consciousness of my own sins refrain me from this undertaking, but rather it giveth me confidence, because in this song I celebrate how thou hast destroyed the kingdom of sin, and granted pardon to the whole world. Hail, venerable cross of God, thou art the wisdom and light of the orb of worlds! How much more worthy of being styled a throne imperial than an instrument of servile torture, since our Emperor and King by thee acquired all power in heaven and on earth, overcame his enemies and redeemed a world!" This is from the wondrous book on the theology of the cross, which Raban Maur sent to the emperor Lewis and to the Palatines. And what words can more clearly express that hunger of grace which Bernardine of Sienna shows to be an element in that which seeks justice, and which, according to the promise of Christ, was to be filled? To remain any longer, therefore, on this subject, would be an unnecessary delay. Perhaps I have already passed beyond the

stretch of indulgence. If historical truth could have been otherwise defended, it would certainly have been better to have at once turned away from these stale objections, and imitated the royal disposition of the lion, which preys on nothing that seems dead.

You can now, I trust, reader, form some judgment of the ages of faith in regard to the hunger and thirst after that true and highest beauty which, as St. Augustin saith, is justice.* You have heard in part the testimony of history respecting those throughout the earth who believed in Christ, separated from the vices of the world, and from the darkness of sinners, restored to grace, and associated with sanctity. Such was the last age, whose coming the noble Mantuan proclaimed on the authority of a mystic, and to him, doubtless, unintelligible song; thus arose and revolved that great order of ages recalling the Saturnian kingdoms, beholding a renovated world, justice returned, times of primeval innocence restored, and a new race descended from above. For who must not be agreed with the Christian platonist of Florence,† in believing that these predictions referred to the purgation of minds, and to the doctrines and justice of Christ which were to abolish the vestiges of the ancient fraud; that by the offspring of this kind which was to behold heroes mixed with gods, and to be seen by them, and which was to govern the universal world, was implied not the posterity of a Pollio, a private citizen to whose infant son so prudent and modest a poet as the great sovran of the pastoral song, would never have applied such a hyperbole, but the generation of those that sought through his eternal son the God of Jacob, who were to have angels ministers, and a legislator over them constituted by God, that the nations might know that they were men—words strictly fulfilled when the whole world, as the church declares, experienced and beheld the fallen raised, what was old, renewed, and all things in part restored to their pristine form, by him from whom they took their beginning. Such was the generation of the meek when directed by him in judgment, and taught his ways, when their humility and labour were seen by him and all their sins remitted. Such, in fine, was the

* Tractat. in Ps. li.

† Marail. Ficin. De Christiana Religione, cap. 24.

Catholic society during ages of faith, militant, not triumphant, in communion with God suffering on earth, afflicted, therefore, in great labours, in perils amidst false brethren, infirm on beholding infirmity, burning at the scandal daily witnessed, having to endure many things, to deplore many things, but notwithstanding all disorders, and all the vicissitudes and calamities incident to its mighty struggle so glorious and so just.

In this argument we have only followed the course adopted by philosophers in their study of the sciences, who, from a multitude of observations made at different intervals, arrive at their conclusion respecting the general laws of all physical phenomena. If single observations should give a result slightly different from that to which the generality lead, they conclude, without hesitation, that the fault is theirs, the error in their observation, and that the even line is the general law; so have we determined the direct movement of the middle ages in relation to the sun of justice, from a series of observations, the inequality and errors of which, taken separately, are compensated by their accumulation.

In conclusion, it falls not to the historian's office to show how the third object of the hunger after justice, which is that of glory, which the blessed suffer in celestial glory, in whom is always the desire, not penal of what is absent, but beatific of what is present, was fulfilled to the generations past, for that would lead him beyond the limits of earth and time, to speak of things heavenly and eternal. It will be sufficient to hear a Bernardine of Sienna, briefly declare what hunger and fulness must have been theirs, when he says, that, "in the intelligence there will be a thirst after the divine vision, which will be satiated by seeing God; in the memory a thirst after divine security, satisfied by the promise of possessing God, and all things in God for ever, according to the words of Christ, 'et gaudium vestrum nemo tollet a vobis;' and in the will a thirst after divine love, which will be satiated in beholding the end of all consummation in the act of the will, to which as nobler than that of the intelligence, is annexed the joy of inebriation from the fulness of his house and from the torrent of

his pleasure. Thus are we to understand the last sounds—'non esurient neque sitient amplius.'"

As swimmers are often carried down with the stream a long way before they can reach the shore, so have I suffered myself to be borne along by this discourse. Yet I have not indulged in any wanton digressions, but the force of the subject itself carried me away; and if I should have returned to things that had been before considered in relation to the meek, their no less intimate connection with justice compelled me to do so. It was one on which it was difficult to speak passably well; for he that had acquaintance with it will think that I have not said enough, and he who has no knowledge of it will suppose that I have been guilty of exaggeration. Moreover, the knowledge of such histories and monuments as have been cited here, belongs not to all men alike, for as Clemens Alexandrinus says, "Some men only see the body of the writing, the letters, and names, as it were, the body of Moses, but others discern the mind and thoughts which are conveyed under these names. They see, as it were, the angels that co-operated with Moses."* But, for the sixth vision hasteneth to an end, here break we off, content with the general impressions which must have been produced by this vast spectacle, without seeking at the end to present any other recapitulation but what may be gathered from the indistinct, blissful sounds—the short transcendent fragments proclaiming an eternal victory, that seem to float around us. How could we coolly return to review and analyse with the art of a cautious and ambitious rhetorician, the pageantry of heaven's grace which we have in a manner partially beheld! "Domine, domine noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in universa terra!" Reader, you have in these words the recapitulation, the best epitome of the whole argument. The vision dies as it were away, and yet the sense of sweet that sprang from it still remaineth in the heart. As we close this book, which tells of the long thirst appeased, methinks a song angelical is heard, and holy, holy, holy, accordant with the just triumphant, a renovated world sings.

* Stromat. Lib. VI. c. 15.

Mores Catholici:

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

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MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE SEVENTH BOOK.

CHAPTER. I.

ENTERING upon the fifth steep of this mount, from which the course of past ages is beheld, we seem forthwith ascending to hear behind us, chaunted sweet, "Blessed the merciful," and "Happy thou, who didst the naked clothe, the hungry feed, the erring counsel, and extend pity to the dead;" and methinks we are seen to pause and look back, like men doubtful of the way that they have taken, for such is the character which faith has stamped on ages which it formed, that, according as we advance through the different divisions of beatitude, the present seems always to suggest the fitting title which should distinguish them from all others in the history of the world. At each stage we thought we had only then discovered the proper qualification; they were ages of the poor in spirit we said at first; then, after a time, it seemed more precise to style them ages of meekness. Proceeding further, we thought it should be rather of blessed mourning. At the last, we were convinced that a hunger and thirst after justice formed their distinctive character; and lo, now, as if all had been imperfectly discerned hitherto, looking forward to what is coming, we seem to have suddenly found out, for the first time, the accurate expression, when we define them ages of mercy, ages of charity

or love. "The fifth beatitude," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "deservedly follows the preceding; for mercy has its birth from them, since, if humility goes before, and the mind becomes meek, and mourns for sins, and thirsts for justice, afterwards will spring pious mercy; and if means of assisting should be wanting, compassion will not be wanting."*

The ancient philosopher complained, that while men were writing in praise of many things, there was no one found to set forth the admirable excellence of love. He says, that he had lately opened a book by a wise man, in which was the praise of salt, showing its immense utility; and he takes occasion, in his usual style of mirth and gravity combined, to hint at instances of many other things equally unfitted, as one might suppose, to be the subject of a panegyric, which are nevertheless found extolled in formal encomiums. In modern times, too, the disposition of men cannot be noted as deficient in regard to the extension of praise; innumerable things obtain it;—speeches, loans, quadruple treaties, bazaars, if built on the site of demolished churches and monasteries, projected laws respecting a new division of property, new projects for securing it, treadmills, patent locks, new policemen, new prisons, perhaps;—but if we exclude

* S. Bernard. Senens. Serm. IX.

from consideration those authors who adhere to the Catholic faith, I believe we might add, in the words of the same philosopher, that no one man has undertaken to praise love worthily. *Ἐπορα ἀξίως ὑμῆσαι*. The generations past, which were familiarized with the sentences of a Chrysostom and an Augustin, and which heard, besides those ancient holy fathers, a Fulgentius, a Thomas, of Aquin, a Bonaventura, a Theresa, a Catherine of Genoa, a Catherine of Sienna, or a Matilda, might be consoled amidst all the calamities which were incident to their state of civilization, by considering how different it was with them, when love was glorified in the human intelligence, and recognised as the only remedy for the woes of the human race; when love, though so sweet a word, was found sweeter still in exercise, in relation to learning, to philosophy, to manners, to legislation, to government; when men who could not, as S. Augustin says, "always speak about it, for many different actions left not leisure to their tongues to speak incessantly on love, knew well that their tongues could treat on nothing better, and what they could not always speak about, were able still constantly to preserve;"* when those, too, were not the objects of least veneration, who could affirm, like the Sage of Athens, though in a new and sweeter style, that they knew nothing of those grand and famous questions, though they were to wish it ever so much, which were discussed with such applause in the schools, as of old they had been by Prodicus, the Chian, and Gorgias, the Leontine, and Polus, the Agreentine, and by many others; but who said always, and everywhere, that in short they knew nothing, excepting a certain little lesson of love, *πλὴν γε μικροῦ τινος μαθήματος τῶν ἐρωτικῶν*.† This the great Augustin would affirm, who says, "Ask yourself what progress have you made in charity, and according to the answer of your heart you may estimate the measure of your approach to heaven."‡ This the blessed Gregory would say, who shows that all the commandments are concerning love, and that all are only one precept. "Our Lord's precepts," saith he, "are many, and only one;—many by diversity of work, and only one in the root of love." This would be the boast of the Abbot Engipius, whom

the sixth age heard, whose vast compilation, arranged under upwards of three hundred heads, embraces in the first and last place the subject of charity as the beginning and the end of perfection. This is the conclusion to which all the wise, holy sentences, collected by that indefatigable Vincent, of Beauvais, will lead, who shows, that the whole of human duty is comprised in the twofold charity, which has for its object God and man.* This is the sum of all the wisdom imparted to the angel of the school, who shows, that the perfection of the spiritual life consists essentially in charity;† and this comprises all that sweet and subtle science which rendered Henry of Ghent, though impenetrable in solemn grandeur to the weak sight of modern observers, so dear to the great Christian Platonists of Florence in the sixteenth century, who learned from him to believe, that love is the plenitude and end of all the law, and of all the holy Scriptures.‡ Each scholastic philosopher, each mystic theologian, of the middle ages might use the poet's words, and say, "Count of me but as one who am the scribe of love; for when he breathes, I take up my pen, and as he dictates, write." This, in short, all the faithful multitude that follow where the fisherman hath led, would repeat with one voice, We know nothing, except a little lesson of love. From this springs all our science, all our theology, all our religion; for "Charity," as St. Bonaventura says, "compriseth all virtue, in the same manner as God containeth in himself all good." It is only as charity produces different effects, according to the occasions presented of opposing evil, or of embracing good, that it assumes different names and forms; for, as S. Augustin says, "virtue is nothing but well-directed love, inducing us to love what we ought to love, and to hate what is worthy of hatred."§ "What is temperance," asks blessed Celred, of Rivaux, "but love which no pleasure seduceth? What is prudence but love, which no error enticeth? What is fortitude but love, which endureth adverse things with courage? What is justice but love, which composeth, by a certain charm, the inequalities of this life?|| What, in short,

* Tractat. VI. in Epist. B. Joan.

† Theagees.

‡ Tract. IX. in Epist. B. Joan.

* Vincent Bellov. Speculum hist. lib. xviii. c. 95. + S. Thom. Tract. de perfect. Christiana.

† Henrici Summ. Art. VIII. q. iii. f. 65.

§ S. Bonaventura, de sept. grad. vit. spiritual. cap. 28.

|| Celredi Speculum Charitatis, lib. i. cap. 31.

is the whole of Catholic religion but a certain little lesson of love?" *Πάν γε σμικροῦ τῶς μαθήματος τῶν ἱερουργῶν.* This, and nothing but this, was the lesson conveyed throughout all lands, even unto the ends of the earth, by the missionaries of Rome, where love sat enthroned and glorified, as if to verify, in latter days of grace, what had been predicted through the blind Pagans, when Eros, or Love, was the mysterious name of that city. Few, consequently, are the things of which the old instructors speak, as Alanus de Insulis observes, in his Summary of the Preacher's Art.* St. Bernard deemed that even letters became, in general, superfluous. "Quiescant a dictando ingenia," saith he, "labia a confabulando, a scribendo digiti, a discurrendo nuntii: non autem quiescant corda die ac nocte meditari in lege Domini, quæ est caritas."†

The scholastic philosophers say, that the gift of counsel brings the fifth beatitude; for, as St. Augustin remarks, the only remedy to preserve us from so many evils being to remit to others, and to give; and utility being the end of counsel, the precept of mercy or charity is evidently what belongs to counsel. "By mercy," says St. Bonaventura, "man merits in this world grace, in death confidence, in judgment mercy, in heaven glory." There is no other utility but what is comprised here, and this is the end of the precept, according to St. Augustin; "for God," saith he, "showeth mercy to us, on account of his own goodness, but we, in turn, show mercy to one another on account of Him: that is, He has compassion on us, that we may enjoy Himself; but we show compassion to one another, in order that we may enjoy Him; not that the great gain which is brought by charity was thought to entitle man to boast as if he owed the blissful consummation to himself." Recollect, reader, what was shown from history in the last book, and thou wilt be free from suspicion. By love divine, man was wholly immersed in the abyss of Christ's merits, and it was love which caused them to be applicable to him. As St. Bernard says, "charitas mercenaria non est, et tamen sine mercede non est."‡

The ages of faith, in relation to the beatitude of mercy or love, from an epoch

clearly distinct from all others of which history speaks, though still in harmony with the voice of ancient tradition, and the deepest sentiment of original nature. "Before the birth of love," Socrates says, "many fearful things took place through the empire of necessity; but," he adds, "when this god was born, all good things arose to men." We may remark, however, that the birth of love in philosophic fable was followed by no such universal happy effects, excepting in the song of poets, or the reveries of those who sought strength and consolation from their images. Cruel of heart were the children of men, merciless the strong, and without hope the weak, till this bright stranger, charity, came down from heaven to transform all things, and to destroy for the redeemed race that stern kingdom of which Plato spoke; stranger, of a truth, might she be called, amongst even the sages who had sung her praise; for to repay evil to an enemy, as well as kindness to a friend, entered into the ideal of justice, according to Simonides, whom Socrates calls a wise and a divine man, and who defined justice to be the rendering to every man his due;* and stranger must she have been, too, in that renowned fellowship, whose generous friendships are consigned to everlasting memory; for if the Pythagoreans were known to treat those whom they loved as gods, they were at least accused of treating all other men as brutes. It is true, they used to evince friendship for one another, even without having ever seen each other; on the mere recognition of their peculiar sign. It is related, that a Pythagorean, making a long journey on foot, came to an inn, where he fell sick, and continued long on his bed to the great expense of the landlord, who provided him with everything needful. As the disease proved fatal, the dying man inscribed a certain symbol on a tablet, and told the landlord, in return for his humanity, to suspend that near the public way, and to watch if any one should stop to observe it; for that such a person would be sure to repay him. A long time after, a certain Pythagorean passed that way, and having observed the tablet, knew by the symbol what it meant; and after making inquiry, not only paid the innkeeper what he had expended, but presented him with a large sum beside.† This, however, resembled

* Alanus de Insulis, Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 1. + Epist. XC.

† De Serm. Dom. in Monte.

§ De Doct. Christ. lib. i. 30.

* De Repub. lib. i.

+ Jamblich. de Pythagoric. vita, cap. 33.

rather the spirit of the secret societies, as they are constituted in modern times, than the comprehensive charity which attended faith. It was, indeed, a magnificent and truly divine thought which we find expressed in the writings of Plato, "that all the sacrifices, and the things over which sacred science presided, and by which the Divinity unites himself with men, had nothing else for their object but the maintenance of love, and its application as a remedy.* Whether regarded as a tradition, or as the conception of a mighty soul, it excites astonishment, and somewhat of veneration: but there ends the prodigy; for if we open history in the hopes of finding some trace of its action, or some foundation for its support, in the deeds of men, we shall be utterly disappointed. It is, therefore, merely an isolated sentence,—a literary curiosity,—or, at the most, an evidence of the height to which one individual genius had soared in imagination, solitary in the tide of times.

The love or charity, which was the source from which so much good flowed to the human race during the ages of faith, was a grace imparted by the Catholic religion, divine, and so far from being identical with natural love, that the latter might exist without there being the least approximation made towards its acquirement. "When any creature loves another on account of something of its own, or if a creature love God on account of something else, then," said the philosophers of the middle ages, "all things are false; and this love is perfectly belonging to nature; for nature, as nature, can attain to no other love but this; for as nature, it loves nothing but itself.† "The natural life," said they, "when there is a cunning, agile, and fervent nature, is so multifarious and intricate; it seeks and finds, and that for its own sake, so many angles, falsehoods, and frauds, that it cannot be said or written. But whatever of divine love is in a deified or divine man, that is so simple, so right, and just, that it never can be explained or written, and it cannot even be known, unless where it exists. Where it does not exist, it cannot be believed or known." Raymund Jordan, celebrated under the name of Idiota, in his contemplations on the blessed Virgin, addresses her in these terms:—"Thou hast loved thy neighbour as thyself; thou

hast loved him without regard to recompence, or to utility of any kind: but thou hast loved him cordially, because thou didst desire only that he might serve God, behold God, and possess eternal life."* That happiness required men neither to injure others, nor to be injured by them, was the saying of Plato,‡ who adds, that the former involved no difficulty; but how could he have been made to believe that the power of not being injured might be gained with equal facility, which, in fact, follows the reception of this divine gift of charity, according to which the very fact of being injured may be converted into a source of the greatest good, by the occasion which it offers of practising virtue?

It is difficult for the soul of man not to love something; it must of necessity be under the dominion of some one affection or other: but there is a difference, and an insurmountable opposition, between the inclinations, which it may obey. "The love of the flesh," St. Jerome says, "is conquered by spiritual love; the desires of the flesh are extinguished by those of the spirit: the diminution of the one becomes the increase of the other."‡

Men of the last century talked of philanthropy in a manner that proved they were far behind heathens in their discernment of moral relations. They pretended to love men, while they avowedly loved pleasure, riches, and glory; whereas the Gentile philosopher had shown the absolute impossibility of uniting such loves. "No one," saith Epictetus, "who is a lover of riches, or a lover of pleasure, or a lover of glory, can be at the same time a lover of men." Marsilius Ficinus, in his letter to Bernard Orzellario, seems to have before his mind the ideal of these hypocrites, when he asks, "Quoniam pacto potest insanus qui Deum odit, homines ullos, qui Dei imagines sunt, diligere?" Truly we are so constituted by nature, that neither can love be virtuous unless it be religious, nor religion true unless received with love. The love which animated the ages of faith was so excellent in its nature, that, as St. Francis de Sales says, "Neither men nor angels could produce it of themselves: the Holy Ghost alone could enkindle its divine flames in the human breast." It was in the mysteries of faith that men of the middle ages learned to

* Conviv. 13.

† Theologia Germanica, cap. 39.

* Idiota de B. Virgine, Pars xi. contemp. 111.

‡ De Legibus, lib. viii.

‡ Epist. ad Eustoch.

love each other ; that warmth whose kindly force gave birth to flowers and fruits of holiness, enlivening the spirits of men contemplative, was all deduced from a divine light. For mark how the ancient ascetic traces it. "That men might become the children of God," says the author of the *Manual* ascribed to St. Augustin, "God condescends to become the child of man. Ah ! who then any longer will be able to cherish any hatred against man, whose nature and resemblance he finds in the humanity of God ? To hate him would be to hate God."*

All the ecstasies of Catholic devotion were to turn men as it were from the divine object of their adoration to practise love and mercy towards their fellow-creatures. "O how admirable is the love of our Lord for men," exclaims St. Theresa, "since the greatest service that they can render him, is to abandon him to procure advantages for one another !"

In the writings of the great theologians of the middle age we may remark occasions in which the exercise of charity is enforced in such a manner as might lead one to suppose that it would interfere with the natural and lawful desires consequent upon faith. Such is that passage in which the Master of the Sentences says, "We may wish that the saints should perfect their passion, on their account and on our own, though it is only by that of Christ we are redeemed ; and we may wish them to be delivered from it. He who should have wished that St. Paul might decline his passion and escape the hands of the wicked, and this through the compassion of piety, would also have had a good will."†

St. Bernard speaks, in a very remarkable manner, of the order of charity. "Let us love," saith he, "in deed and in truth, because we may be more moved to deeds of mercy by a certain impulse of vivid truth than by the affection of that charity. He hath ordained charity in me, saith the text—which of these ? Both, but in an opposite order ; for the charity of deed prefers the inferior—that of affection the superior, things. For in a well-affected mind no doubt the love of God is preferred to the love of men—that of more perfect to that of weaker men—heaven to earth—eternity to time—soul to flesh. Yet in a well-ordered action, frequently or even always the opposite order is found ;

for we are more anxious and more often occupied respecting the care of our neighbour than the worship of God, and we attend to our weaker brethren with more diligent assiduity than to the more perfect ; and we attend more to the peace of the world than to the glory of heaven, by a law and necessity of humanity ; and through the disquietude of temporal care, we are scarcely permitted to feel any thing respecting eternal ; and we are more employed about the weakness of our body than the care of our soul. So thus we make the last first, and the first last. Who doubts but that a man in prayer speaks to God ? and yet how often are we interrupted by charity, and taken away on account of those who need our assistance or our conversation ? How often doth a good conscience lay aside the book, to apply to work of the hands ? How often, in order to administer earthly things, must I justly refrain from celebrating mass ? The order is preposterous, but necessity hath no law. The charity of deed, therefore, fulfils its order according to the command of the Father of the family, beginning from the last things,—pious, certainly, and just order, which accepteth not persons, nor considers the value of things, but the necessities of men."*

Inseparable, in fact, were the theological virtues ; and therefore St. Augustin affirms,† "that if any one should fall from faith, of necessity he must also fall from charity ; on which truth the whole of history is but a continued comment. Si à fide quisque ceciderit, à charitate etiam necesse est cadat." Ah, England ! vessel without a pilot in tempestuous days, how clearly is this sentence verified in thee ! when now thy living ones abide not without war, and one malicious gnaws another ! How truly might one apply to thee the words of Dante !—

"Seek, wretched one, around thy sea-coasts wide ;
Then homeward to thy bosom turn, and mark
If any part of thee sweet charity enjoy !"

Thou wouldst not talk of loving wholesome bitterness, to encourage thy vituperative scribes, if thou hadst rightly marked what the Apostle says ; but now mayest thou see the consequences of revolt, which makes such division and such party rage as needs no laboured phrase of mine to set it off.

* Cap. 26.

† Lib. i. *Distinct.* xlviii.

* In *Cantica*, *Serm.* IV.

† De *Doct. Christ.* lib. i. *cap.* 37.

Reader, I would not needlessly revive a theme that might seem to lead us into ways of accusation; but when it is a question of the charity of Catholic times, who for an instant can be insensible to the prodigious moral change which has taken place wherever there has been a renouncement or a diminution of the ancient faith? "God has done you a great favour," said the original author of the German Reform, addressing the inhabitants of Wittemberg, "and has given you the Word in all its purity; notwithstanding, I see no charity in you." "Our age," says another champion of the same opinions, "may seem sufficiently to have provided against the growth of idolatry in England: O that some order were taken for the increase of charity!"* Truly it was not so easy for them to find the concord of this discord, or to prevent their standard from being followed by a crowd of most impassioned admirers, resembling the Megarian poet, who longs impatiently to return to his country and be revenged on his political adversaries, whose blood he wishes to drink,

"Τὼν εἰς μάλαν αἷμα πρῶν."†

While they whom one city or one house contained met with tongues so fierce conflicting, the dejected minstrel might demand,

"Can piety the discord heal,
Or staunch the death-feud's enmity?
Can christian love, can patriot zeal,
Can love of blessed charity?"

But it was evident, from the nature of the contest, that peace and the mercy of union were excluded. As Æschylus says, in the *Agamemnon*, "Pour oil in the same cup, and vinegar—in vain you will persuade the unsocial streams to mix." Witness the oil in the ascending movement of Catholicism, at the very time of the schism. In mystic vision God had spoken to the sainted advocate of Sienna, and had said, "I will ordain the reformation of the holy church according to thy desire, not by the sword or the cruelty of war, but with pacific quiet, with the tears and labours of my friends whom I have appointed as labourers for your souls in the mystic body of holy mother church, offering to me continual prayer for the salvation of all men, and bearing the fruits of virtues, doctrine, and example towards men."‡ And such, in fact, was the pro-

gress—sweetly, insensibly, at first; without noise, without display, without the pride of science, without the parade of pompous words, humbly and powerfully, like the Gospel, did a St. Theresa, a St. John of the Cross, a Lewis of Blois, a St. Charles of Borromeo, turn the hearts of the evil and revolted spirits to the wisdom of the just. This was the oil, the love by which diabolic circumvention was avoided, and the carnal life excluded.* Witness the counteraction in the whole spirit and movement of the innovators. "I am proud and unpitiable," says the great German leader of Erfurt; "he that bites me shall be well bitten." When such were the chief meteors, can we wonder at discovering the original or reflected colour of those creatures which flocked and fluttered round them? Love was not in their looks, either to God or to each other. Wherever they passed, charity fled before them. The whole form and tone of society was reversed; mercy was stigmatised as prevarication, all pity choked with custom of fell deeds. Nor was this spectacle new to the church. In early ages the heretics even attacked the doctrine of mercy. The Pelagians, by accepting the apathy of the stoics,† undermined it as effectually as the disciples of the Porch, who called mercy a vice; so that, Tertullian says, the philosophers were their patriarchs; and on other grounds the Montanists and Novatians opposed it, denying the efficacy of penitence; for which inhuman opinion, as Eusebius terms it, and most alien from fraternal charity, Novatus was condemned by Cornelius and a council of Fathers.‡ Still more direct was the hostility of the Manichæans to the doctrine of the blessed. St. Athanasius expressly says that there is no mercy with them, but that they deem compassion on the poor the work of an enemy; for which opinion, he attacks the Eusebian Arians.§ The cruelty of the Manichæans was the result of the impious and absurd dogma of Manes, respecting the creation of flesh and bread by the evil principle, and the infusion of soul into them; so that, St. Augustin says, "While they believe that bread weeps, they will not give it to a man whom they see weeping;"|| and elsewhere, "that though they should behold a man dying from hunger, they would forbid their disciples to give him bread, and would have

* *Idiotæ Contemp.* c. 12.

† *S. Hieron. ad Ctes. cont. Pelag.*

‡ *Euseb. vi.* 35.

§ *S. Athan. Ep. ad Solitar.*

|| *Cont. Adimant.* xi.

* *Fuller's Thoughts*, 209. † *Theognis*, 785.

‡ *S. Cath. Senensis, Tract. II. cap. 86.*

more compassion on a cucumber than on a man.*" But in all ages, whatever may be the error chosen by disobedient men, the mere fact of their wishing to destroy unity is decisive of the question.

"He who remains separated from the mystic body of Christ," says Lewis of Blois, "does not live in God, and is not vivified by Christ, who is the head of the church. His works will profit him nothing, since he hath not charity; and he cannot have charity who divides the unity which is most dear to God and necessary to Christians. Although he should say a hundred or a thousand times that he had Christ for his foundation, he is deceived; he says what is not true: for he who deserts the body, deserts the head also; and it is impossible that he should have Christ for the foundation. The foundation of his faith is corrupt, and therefore whatever is built upon it must fall."†

"What would avail even sound faith," asks St. Augustin, "or the sound sacrament of the one faith, when the soundness of charity was destroyed by the deadly wound of schism? Men might talk of charity, but they could not possess it if they stood apart. Their own act of protestation was their own judgment. *Diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea.*" "Hear, my brethren," adds St. Ambrose; "these vestments are his sacraments. The heretics have been able to divide them; but there was another vestment which no one divided: there was, says the Gospel, a tunic without seam, woven from the top throughout. What is this tunic but charity, which no one can divide? What is this tunic but unity? They cast lots for it; no one divides it. The heretics have been able to divide the sacraments, they have not been able to divide charity; and because they could not divide it, they withdrew, and it remained entire. No one ravishes it from the Catholic Church; and if without the Church there should be any who begin to possess it, they re-enter with it into her bosom, as the dove with the olive branch into the ark."‡ They enter the Church in loving, like St. Augustin, and they pass from the militant to the triumphant Church, celebrating the praise of love, like the Count of Stolberg, with their last breath. If we compare, accordingly, the separate theologians who speak the most eloquently of the Almighty and of the love which is due to men, with those of the Catholic

Church—as the Augustins, the Ephrems, the Gregories, the Bernards, the Francisces, Dominicks, Ignatiuses, and others—whether eminent or obscure, whether in ancient or modern times, we shall at once discern the gulf which is between them. They all use the same expressions; but, as St. Francis de Sales remarks, "The words pronounced by these true lovers of the Almighty are enflamed and embalmed, if we may say so, with the delicious perfume of divine love; whereas, with the former, they are only cold expressions; which neither contain the force nor the sweetness of charity." In fine, wherever charity was found, the Catholic Church was found; for as St. Ambrose says, "*Ubi perfecta charitas, ibi omnis fides.*"*

Leaving, now, the gall for the sweet fruit this history promises, I find, at first, two things to notice—the doctrine of the ages of faith, and its external operation; the manner in which the divine principle of charity, was intellectually developed or explained, and the visible fruits which sprung from it to the human race. Of the first, I have already briefly spoken; and little need be added here, since the whole moral teaching and philosophy of the middle ages may be said to be but a development and repetition of the one lesson of love which the Son of God bequeath to men as the choicest inheritance. Every thing connected with the Catholic Church appertains to love, proceeds from love, terminates in love, and is, in fact, in its very essence, the ardour of love; so that on Holy Saturday, at the joyful opening of her glorious solemnities, after singing thrice allelujah, her only prayer is that God would infuse into us the spirit of his charity; thus implying that the sole object of the Paschal sacraments is the increase of love, to render concordant in piety those who are united in one faith. It matters not to which of her doctors or to what school we apply for information: there is but one dogma laid down with scientific precision, but one sentiment broadly and fervently expressed. There are some passages, however, which may deserve more especial notice, as placing the practical evidence and consequences of this great principle in a point of view singularly striking. Thus St. Odo, the second Abbot of Cluni, says, "There are many things which demonstrate that there are men constituted in the Church who are infidels." And to prove this, he adds, "For as Christ, through charity, came in the flesh, it follows that he

* De Mor Man. ii. 16.

† Ludovic. Bloisius, Epist. ad Florentium.

‡ Enarrat. II. in Ps. 21.

* S. Ambros. Epist. LXXIV.

who has not charity denies that he came in the flesh ; and as they accept the persons of men, therefore they deny Christ and truth. Behold, after this, while in the eyes of men they may be Christians, if strictly estimated before God, they have no faith and no title to the name.* This is any thing but common-place declamation. A similar instance occurs in the writings of St. Zeno of Verona, where he says, "Let us emulate each other, O my brethren in love! Let our respect for the image of our God make known our gratitude to him: for let us be assured that the injury done to the image falls on Him whom the image represents; and man is the image of his Maker."† To the same effect speaks Raban Maur: "Omnis quippe homo, in quantum homo est, diligendus est propter Deum: Deus vero propter seipsum."‡ "Behold what is learned in the house of discipline," says another ancient author: "to love God, to love your neighbour—God as God, your neighbour as yourself." The austere recluse, whose life is spent in the rigours of penitence, has no other learning. "All virtue and all perfection," says St. Catherine of Sienna, "proceeds from charity, and charity is nourished by humility. The way of life is the way of common charity, observing the commandments actually and the counsels mentally."§ Blessed Macharius said that none could be clean of heart without being merciful to sinners; and with the same conviction St. Bernard remarks, that our Lord, in the order of beatitudes, places the merciful before the clean of heart; "For," he observes, "it is only after the exercise of such charity that the human heart can be made pure, and enabled to see that truth for whose love it was content to bear the evils of others."|| St. Chrysostom even says, that if virginity should want the works of mercy, it will be cast out with the impure.¶ We find the same lesson inculcated in all books of the middle ages that answered to our classical works for popular instruction, such as the *Doctrinal of Wisdom*, by Guy de Roye, Archbishop of Sens, of which a copy was placed by authority in every parish church of that city and diocese, in order that the curates of the said parishes might read two or three chapters to the people, if any one should express

a wish to hear something from it, there being an indulgence to all who should read from it for others. Here we read, "Faith without charity is mortal sin."

St. Cæsarius of Arles remarks, that however potent is the remedy of charity to heal the moral wounds, there is no man who may not procure it with the aid of God. "As for other good works," saith this guide of the fifth age, "there may perhaps be found an excuse when they are not practised; but there is no excuse where charity is wanting. Some one may say, 'I cannot fast,' but who can say, 'I cannot love?' One may say, 'Because of the weakness of my body, I cannot abstain from meat;' but who can say, 'I cannot love my enemies, nor pardon those who have offended me?' Let no one deceive himself, my dear brethren, for no one deceives God." Again, in reference to philosophy, mark the sayings of the middle age: "The fruit of science consists in charity," says Raban Maur.* "Whoever attains to the summit of wisdom, must of necessity attain to the highest point of charity; for no one is perfectly wise, unless he who perfectly loves—quia nemo perfecte sapit nisi is qui perfecte diligit."† Similarly, John Scot Erigena, showing that the end of philosophy can only be attained by the descent of divine wisdom and the ascent of the human intelligence, proves that both these means are the result of love. "For," saith he, quoting Maximus, "in proportion as the human intelligence ascends by charity, does the divine wisdom descend by mercy; and this is the cause and substance of all virtues."‡ "The law and doctrine of God," says St. Augustin, "however just and holy and good, nevertheless killeth, if the spirit doth not give life, by which it may be held not as if by reading, but by loving." "In vain will the abundance of divine knowledge increase in us," saith Hugo of St. Victor, "unless the flame of divine charity likewise increase." How remarkable is it to hear the great philosophers of Italy, in the fifteenth century, declaring with Marsilius Ficinus, that they would rather praise benevolence or charity than genius!§ They must have observed that the spirit of those first days of Christianity, when the Pagans used to be charmed on beholding the affection of Christians for each other, had been as it were embodied in the very ceremonial of the Catholic mysteries; for,

* Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 172.

† S. Zenonis, Tract. II. lib. i.

‡ Rabani Mauri De Institut. Clericorum, lib. iii. 4.

§ S. Cath. Senens. Tract I. 63.

|| De Gradibus Humil. 3.

¶ Hom. 79. in Matt.

* De Institut. Clericorum, lib. iii. 4.

† Id. iii. 5.

‡ Joan. Scot. Erig. de Divisione Nature, lib. i.

§ Mars. Ficini. Epist. lib. i.

as those cannot be aliens from love with whom is Truth, at those parts of the holy Mass where the priest has been reading in silence some celestial words which have elevated his soul to a great union with God, he turns round to the people and gives vent to the emotion which they have inspired by words of charity, praying that the Lord may be with them. And in fact, wherever the divine mysteries were celebrated, countenances were seen visibly proclaiming mercy, and that spiritual affection which is so beautifully expressed by Guy de Roye, Archbishop of Sens, in these words, at the conclusion of his *Doctrinal de Sapience*:—"Although I am not good, I wish greatly that all others may be good. I should wish to be the worst of all men in the world, not that I should become worse, for I need lose nothing, but that all others should be better than myself." We had occasion to remark, in a former book, that in the common intercourse of life, a form of salutation indicating love was generally used during the middle ages, insomuch that we find the neglect of it in any instance denounced as arguing a barbarity below the manners of brute animals, who, as the universal doctor remarks, are always seen to rejoice on meeting any others of their kind, and to greet them as it were with familiarity.* When the cruel discords between Guelph and Ghibelline had caused a suspension of this practice in Italy, we find a John of Vicenza and other holy preachers insisting on its being resumed; so that not only in Lombardy, but in all the Italian provinces, it became again, we are told, the custom, as in other countries, for men on meeting to salute one another in the name of Jesus Christ; on observing which, an intelligent stranger might feel prompted to exclaim, like the Pagans of old, "See how they love one another!" Ah! the remark could never have been suggested in ages of faith—those ages of mercy, when there was so much more practical equality and freedom than ever can exist where infidels have sway,—See how they hate, and envy, and ridicule one another; for it was then frequently on earth as it will be hereafter eternally in the blissful seats, where the possession of good, as St. Augustin saith, "is in no manner lessened by the accession of partners;" and that possession, above all, was the object of desire, which the number of proprietors diminisheth not. "Give thanks to God," says Lewis of Blois, "for the perfection

that you observe in other men. In this manner, delivered from envy, you will come by a divine charity to appropriate to yourself, in some degree, the goods of others."* The cause of all this was faith. From the very source of purest love there flowed daily into innumerable souls the grace which prompted the multitudinous works of goodness and pity; for who could approach the fountain of sweetness, and not bring back some degree of sweetness? Love, which came first through the ears, inspiring the hearts of the hearers, was an unquiet thing. Affliction had rest, temptation rest; but this knew no rest: for its object and its source were both infinite.

The character of mercy, in ages of faith, presents many especial points which should fix our attention, of which the first may be its universality. St. Bernard assigns, as one reason to explain the words of St. Paul, that he saw the world crucified by the obligations of vices, and that he was crucified to it by the effect of compassion.† That is a comment which no one but a Catholic doctor would ever have suggested. The principle of choice was not admitted in the sphere of charity; for the Master of the Sentences shows the obligation of loving all men in God, either for being good or for having the capacity of goodness, because they might be good.‡

This duty was seen in action, in the daring charity of a Robert d'Arbrissel, the great missionary of the eleventh century, and founder of Fontevault, who used to penetrate into the impure abodes of vice, in order to announce to their wretched captives the mercy of God. On one of these occasions at Rouen, he received the following answer: "Twenty years have I been in this place, and no one has ever come to speak to me of Christ and his goodness; yet if I knew that these things were true—" That word, that half-uttered wish sufficed: he seized the happy moment, led forth the victims, conducted them to the retreat which he had opened in the desert, and made them pass from the cruelty of the demon to the mercy of Christ.§

A similar act, imitating that abundant love of God which caused the blessed Son to descend into hell,|| forms the subject of a drama written by the nun Hroswitha, and acted by her sisters in the convent of Gan-

* Institut. Spirit. cap. 12.

† Sermon VII. de Quadrag.

‡ Lib. III. Distinct. 27.

§ MSS. de l'Abbaye de Vault Cernay Bayle Fontevault.

|| Idiote Contemp. VIII.

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 27.

dersheim, in the eleventh century. Abraham is the title of the play in which this occurs ; but the details are only borrowed from a legend of the fourth century, written by St. Ephrem, deacon of Edessa. Pope Innocent III. addressed letters to all the faithful of Christ, reminding them that among the works of charity proposed to us by the authority of the sacred page, as the evangelical text witnesseth, not the least is to recall the erring from the path of his error, and especially to invite to the bonds of a legitimate marriage women living voluptuously in open flagitiousness ; and declaring therefore, by authority, that all persons who should rescue women from such places, and enable them to become wives, would contribute to the remission of their own sins.* He writes to the consuls and people of Viterbo, to admonish them not to permit any one to trouble the daughter of a certain citizen by denying her legitimacy ; since, although born previous to the marriage of her parents, they had subsequently been married, and therefore their former offspring ought to be reputed legitimate according to the canons.† To a scholastic desiring to be admitted to holy orders, and at the same time confessing that the sins of his parents form an impediment, the same pontiff, considering his literature and honest conversation, makes void by apostolical benignity the impediment arising from his birth, and grants him permission to proceed to sacred orders, and to obtain canonically ecclesiastical benefices.‡ “It is pride,” says Guy de Roye, “to scorn relations on account of sin. The holy Evangelist is not ashamed to recognise four women that were sinners as of the lineage of our Lord, according to his human nature.”§ The distance is certainly immense between this voice of an Archbishop of Sens, in ages of faith, and the morality of drawing-rooms at present in countries that boast of social perfection ; but the fact is, that nothing like Pharisaical severity can be detected in Catholic manners during the ages when every act in violation of the law of God subjected offenders to the censures of the church. Maria Longa, the illustrious widow of the chancellor of the kingdom of Naples, and foundress of the hospital of Incurables in that capital, used to repair to haunts im-

pure, and remonstrate with the unhappy persons whom she found there, many of whom, by persuasions and benignity, she rescued from the jaws of the infernal pit ; providing for them future subsistence, either as holy attendants in her hospital, or as virtuous mothers of families.* St. Chrysostom says, “that there is nothing οὐτε χαρακτηριστικὸν as mercy, nothing so powerful to imprint a character on the mind,” and, in fact, even on the external form ; for Catholic charity marks the forehead of such persons with a certain indescribable sign. As a living author also observes, something attractive, unknown to themselves, emanates from them. One of this mould is no sooner beheld than a magic charm surrounds him. The outcasts and weak victims of disordered life love him at first sight, and lay hold of his mantle ; they supplicate him with joined palms to return, and cry out, “Save us.” And were he to pass on without seeming to regard their misery, they would be seized with terror, and convinced that the figure before their eyes was not him in reality, but a spirit and deluding phantom. As the disciples thought that night, when overtaken by the tempest, and seeing their Master approaching, they plied their oars with greater vigour, being consoled and encouraged ; but when he wished to pass by them, they were thrown into dismay, and exclaimed that it was a sceptre ; for as they knew what was the humanity and compassion of his mind, they were convinced that, had it been indeed their sweet Master, it would never have left them thus to perish in the angry waves.†

It is clear, also, from innumerable passages in the histories and other books of the middle ages, that there was a desire to imitate to the letter the example of the Deity in that attribute of which the Church speaks, where she says, “The mercy of man is towards his neighbour, but the mercy of God is upon all flesh.”

The ancients, in punishing cruelty to birds and beasts, expressly declared that they sought not to vindicate the animal, but to condemn a vice which might be dangerous to the republic.‡ Their acts, therefore, bore no resemblance to the tenderness of Catholic men in ages of faith, who deemed no creature of God unworthy of a participation in the effects of their

* Epist. Innocentii, III. lib. i. 112.

† Epist. Inn. III. Lib. x. 109.

‡ Id. lib. xvi. 74.

§ Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

* Annales Capucinatorum, an. 1542.

† Cresolii Anth. Sacra.

‡ Quintil. v. 9. Phot. Cod. 279.

good-will. Behold a most attractive picture which Alexander Hesse has lately presented to those who visit the gallery of the Louvre! The scene is at Florence, as we infer from the towers of the old ducal palace which are seen in the back ground. A group of persons is formed around a bird-catcher, who is reckoning money. A young man of noble form, in graceful attire, is opening the door of a cage from which a bird is escaping. Some empty cages are at his feet. The elder spectators are regarding what passes with looks of calm meditation that announce thoughts far beyond those of the young admirers, who with infinite delight are watching the birds as they fly round their deliverer. This man of mercy is Leonardo de Vinci, who used frequently, as Vasari relates, to purchase birds in cages for the sake of restoring them to liberty. When the streets of cities beheld such scenes, what might not have been witnessed in the retreats of the religious? The reader will be able to judge from remembering the instances before given as illustrating the manners of the meek. St. Francis of Assisium has been seen employed in removing worms from the road, that they might not be trampled by travellers, considering that our Divine Redeemer compared himself to a worm of the earth, and also having compassion on the creatures of God. "Going to New Alexandria," says Sophronius, "we found Abbot John, who had spent eighty years in that monastery, so full of charity that he was pitiful also to brute animals. Early in the morning he used to give food to all the dogs that were in the monastery, and would even bring corn to the ants, and to the birds on the roof.*" "These," says St. Francis de Sales, "are the admirable effects of a goodness and simplicity which the world cannot comprehend, but which nevertheless display a profound wisdom inspired by charity." In the modern schools they would be deemed beneath notice; yet how many understood and valued them even as titles to canonization in the ages which have been called barbarous. But it is with generations as with men individually: according to the remark of Marsilius Ficinus, "the stupid are more cruel than the ingenious." What a sublime instance of this mercy is furnished by the bulls of sovereign pontiffs, attaching the penalty of excommunication, and all its eternal consequences

affecting the immortal souls of the reasonable creature, to the cruelty which is practised in those combats of animals which the Spaniards had persisted in celebrating from the days of Paganism! Pius V. declared that an attendance at such sanguinary spectacles was incompatible with the mercy of a Christian, and that whoever fell in such combats should be considered an apostate, and buried like the beasts whom he had tormented.

The love which was associated with faith did not consist in mere empty protestations, like the universal philanthropy of which the last century heard so much and felt so little. "I love you," says St. Ambrose, "as if you were my own sons; for nature is not more vehement in loving than grace. Yea, rather, we ought certainly to love more those whom we believe will be with us for ever than those with whom we are only in this present world." That such views were realised, we can learn from the very tombs of the middle ages; for on that of Faledro, Duke of Venice in the eleventh century, which is in the Church of St. Mark, we read these lines:—

"Cunctaque jucunde faciens, dans semper abunde,
Ut fieret plenus quicunque veniret egenus;
Plus quoque longinquos refovens quam carne
propinquos."*

Although to the efficacy of this divine love Christian history bears evidence in almost every page, it will not be without use to hear it attested by the ancient writers. To show this, they appeal to the stupendous mysteries of faith, the incarnation and death of Christ; for love caused God to die. "What more violent than love?" cries St. Bernard. "It triumphs over God; and yet what less violent, since it is love?" "When under the influence of love, every act of a man," says Richard of St. Victor, "seems to him useless, nay intolerable, unless it can concur and conduce to the one end of his desire. If he can enjoy what he loves, he thinks he has all things; without it, all things seem detestable, all things vile. Nothing can satiate the desire of his ardent mind: he thirsts and drinks, and yet by drinking he does not extinguish his thirst; but the more he drinks, the more he thirsts. Who can worthily explain the violence of this supreme degree of charity? What is there that penetrates deeper into

* Pratum Spirituale, cap. 184.

* Splend. Ven. in Thes. Antiq. Ital. V.

the heart of man, that impels it with more vehemence?"*

St. Francis of Sales does not disdain to seek an illustration of divine love in the writings of Plato, whose very language he adopts, following St. Augustin, who shows that the term love has been rendered as sacred by the word of God as charity, and the great St. Denis, who also approves of it expressly in his treatise on divine names. In fact, the principle of that harmony in the social order, which was remarked in a former book, cannot be better represented than in the words of Socrates, where he argues that love must have been born in later times, since those hold events among the gods of violence and chains which are related by Hesiod and Parmenides, and which belong to the reign of necessity; for if love had then ruled, we should never have heard of such dreadful things, but all would have been friendship; since love brings union and joy to men, and causes *εἰρήνην μὲν ἐν ἀνθρώποις, πλάγει δὲ γαλήνην*. What more Catholic than his doctrine that the four cardinal virtues are included in love; and that love, being itself the best and most beautiful of things, is also the cause of whatever else is beautiful and good? "This," saith he, "causeth us to abound in friendly alliances, fraternities, and to agree with one another; being our guide in festivities, extending gentleness and mildness, and banishing all savage barbarism. For love," he continues, "is liberal of beneficence *φιλόδοτος εὐμενίας*, but sparing of enmity, *ἔδωρος δυσμενίας*—the father of tenderness, of delicacy, of splendour, of grace, of desire, studious of all good, neglectful of all evil. In labour, in fear, in longing, in discourse, a guide, a companion, a helpmate; and the best of saviours, the ornament of men, the best and most perfect ruler, to whom every man should yield obedience, chaunting the sweetest hymns."

To what cause would you ascribe the generous acts of self-devotion recorded in the annals of Catholic ages, if not to that which even the Gentile sage would allege as alone capable of producing them. Love?—"They only," saith he, "who love are willing to die. And of this Alcestis, the daughter of Peleus, was an evidence to the Greeks, who desired to die alone for her husband; which devotion seemed so admirable not only to men, but even to the gods, that they gave her many and great gifts as

a reward, and amongst them not only what they never gave but to a number easily counted, to return alive from Hades, but also in reality to lead back the soul of him whom she went to seek; but Orpheus the son of Eager they sent back from Hades without having gained his object: showing him only the phantom of his wife, for whom he came, but not giving her real person, because he seemed to be half-spirited and effeminate, being a harper, and not to have courage to die for love like Alcestis, but to be intent on contriving how he might enter Hades alive; therefore they awarded him this punishment, and caused him to die through means of his wife, not honouring him like Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to the islands of the happy, because being told by his mother that he would die if he should kill Hector, but not killing him, that he should return home and live to old age, he dared nevertheless, bearing assistance to his friend Patroclus, and avenging him, not only to die for him, but die upon his dead body; and the gods more highly honoured Achilles even than Alcestis, since him only did they send to the islands of the happy, because the love which made him so dare was purely affection of the mind, and divine, and unconnected with the senses."* Can any language lay bare more completely the true principle of those exalted achievements of which all Catholic story rings? Or how could we exhibit in a more striking manner the contrast which really exists between the Catholic spirit and that which emanates from every other rule? Consider the manners of the ages of faith, keeping this imagery of Plato in view, and you will find that which he faintly discerned, calling it the spirit of Alcestis and of Achilles every where. It is this which rendered possible all their institutions, which are now said to be impossible. Look around you, and what do you observe but the spirit of Orpheus, whom Plato styles a jongleur? It is not the voluntary and complete offering of a whole heart which is presented, but it is a spirit curious and knowing rather than loving, through which men stand to inquire whether the doing this or that will send their souls to hell; contriving, seeking half-measures, and selfish even in its dictates that would pass for generous.

To Plato again we might refer with advantage, when observing the connexion between the love of the blessed merciful

* Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ Charitatis, I.

* Conviv. cap. 6, 7.

and that wondrous development of the arts, as well as that acute and active intelligence, which characterized the ages of faith; for he remarks that not only in fortitude does love equal Mars, but that in prudence and wisdom it excels equally; since it is to that men owe the inventions of art;—an assertion which could only have been the result of speculation in him, for it was not verified until the commencement of an era that he did not live to see, but to which the experience of Catholic ages would lead all men to assent, although it is in contradiction to that of our modern civilization, which can boast indeed of many surprising inventions, without the possibility of raising a question whether they can be traced to cupidity, or, like those which glorified the ages of faith, to the agency of divine love. Similarly in relation to the inheritance of the meek, we might explain, with Plato's assistance, why during those ages a larger portion of mankind participated in the enjoyment of the Muses; for he shows that every one under the influence of love becomes a poet. In like manner, we might appeal to his discernment in proof that it was love which made men hunger and thirst after justice. "What love desires," saith he, "must be something which it does not possess; since it is the nature of all desire to seek what is not actually enjoyed: therefore love, always desiring beauty, of which justice is the highest kind, cannot be itself beautiful; and always desiring goodness, must be wanting in goodness: not that it is evil, which would be an impious suggestion; for it is not necessary that what is not beautiful should be vile, or that what is not wise should be ignorant;—*ὅτι τὸ περὶ σοφίας καὶ ἀγαθίας, which is ἡ ὁρμή δόξα*. Therefore love holds a middle place between perfection and imperfection; it is something between pure and vile, good and evil, mortal and immortal, divine and human." "Love," he observes, "is poor; it goes barefoot, it reposes on the ground, it is like a beggar who is stretched at the door of a house." What could better explain the mystery of the lives of many holy men in ages of faith? Was it not love which induced the great St. Francis to embrace such perfect poverty, and to leave such rules of poverty to his order? Was it not love which, after reducing St. Francis Xavier to extreme indigence, inspired him

to set out for the new world, to travel through the Indies and Japan, clothed in the tattered garments of a beggar? Was it not love which induced St. Charles Borromeo to practise the most strict poverty amidst the immense riches attached to his high birth and to his dignities of cardinal and archbishop? so that Panigarole compared him to a dog which in its master's house eats only bread, drinks only water, and sleeps upon straw.

The conviction of men during the ages of faith, respecting the happiness resulting from this divine possession, cannot be better expressed than in the very words of the same philosopher, who says, "Love is the remedy for those things, from the cure of which the greatest happiness results to the human race."*

O felix hominum genus,
Si vestros animos Amor,
Quo cælum regitur, regat!†

This, they would infer, is that fire, without which all the gifts of creation had been useless to men.‡ "Si dederit homo omnem substantiam domus suæ pro dilectione, quasi nihil despiciet eam." "Let every man ask his conscience," says Richard of St. Victor, "and doubtless he will find that as nothing is better, so nothing is sweeter than charity.§ There is this difference," he observes, "between the delights of charity and those of wisdom; that the latter can be drawn from one's own heart, but the intimate delights of charity are drawn from the heart of another; for he who greatly loves, and desires equally to be loved, is not so much delighted as anxious to draw that sweetness of love for which he thirsts from the heart of the one he loves; but the delights of wisdom are so much the more delightful, as they are drawn from one's own heart."|| "True," says he, elsewhere, "charity woundeth, charity enslaveth, charity maketh weak, charity bringeth defect; but in so doing, it only conferreth the greater felicity. O quam male fortis est, quem tot charitatis vincula tenere non possunt. O quam male liber est, quem hujus captivitatis jura non involvunt."¶

* Conviv. cap. 14. † Boeth. Lib. II. 8.

‡ Plat. Protagoras.

§ De Trinitate, I. Lib. iii. 3.

|| Id.

¶ Id. Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ Charitatis.

CHAPTER II.



THE charity of the blessed merciful in ages of faith, was beheld in the twofold operation of refraining them from evil, and of prompting them to works of love, in reference to which history is not silent, as the subsequent pages of this book will, I believe, abundantly demonstrate. The necessity which urged them to undergo this action, is represented by those who guided them as constituting the last of those burdens spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, styled the burden of the beasts of the south, of those who carry the south wind, "which signifies," saith blessed Ælred, "the Holy Spirit, by whose impulse their happy souls are impelled and directed hither and thither, carrying the burden of the south, of the Spirit, that is the charity of God;" which was the burden that Paul sustained, when he said, "*quis infirmatur et ego non infirmor?*" and again, "*Tristitia mihi magna est, et continuus dolor cordi meo pro fratribus meis secundum carnem.*" The men whom we are about to behold will be seen, therefore, loaded with many burdens,—loaded with the infirmity of others,—loaded with the necessity of others,—loaded with the perversity of others. We shall behold them carrying as their burden the hunger of the poor, the oppression of the weak, the misery of the sick, the temptation of the prosperous, the calamity of the fallen. They are loaded with the tribulation of the people, the desolation of orphans, the tears of widows, the affliction of captives. They fulfil the law of Christ, by bearing the burdens of their brethren. What is that burden? Truly the infirmities of their manners, and of their bodies.*

Love being in the heart, the root of all evil was cut off at once; and, therefore, whatever effects we shall hereafter witness, will be nothing but the natural consequence of that first cause; but it will be well, in the beginning of our inquiry, to consider that which is said by Truth itself to come immediately out of the abundance

of the heart, and to attempt to show from history, that what the mouth spoke, indicated the possession of a divine beatitude; for though nothing seems more volatile, and less capable of being fixed in chronicles, than the familiar speech of men, the conversations of the middle age are, notwithstanding, in respect to charity, subject perfectly within the reach of historical investigation.

Not without serious cause, and deep mystery, say ancient writers, did Christ, when about to cure the deaf and dumb, groan so deeply; for, considering the number of evils to which the use of the tongue and ears are liable, without doubt he had regard to the dangerous nature of the benefit which he was going to confer. How can those who have an upright heart be put to death, according to what is said in the Psalm?† "It is by scandal," adds Origen, "and by relating it. A man enters into the Church of Jesus Christ with all the simplicity of innocence, and the desire of affecting his salvation; but if this new brother should remark, either in the actions or words of those who are more ancient than himself in the faith, any thing in formal opposition to the faith, or if he should hear it remarked by others, soon his weakness gives way to this scandal; he falls, and his fall is the work of those who gave and published this scandal; and when fallen, he is truly put to death: all principle of life escapes from his soul; it is dead; and his blood will fall upon those who have shed it."‡ How deeply this sin was considered in the middle ages, may be learned from the discourse of S. Bernard, upon what he styles the execrable lust of detraction, and of hearing detraction. "Remark," he says, "how easily the swiftly running word can infect a great multitude of souls with the stain of this malice. The feet of such men are swift to shed blood, as swift as the word flies. It is one individual who speaks, and only to one person, and yet that one word, in a moment, will slay

* D. Ælredi Serm. in Isaia, cap. 13.

† Ps. xxxvi. 14. ‡ Origen. Hom. on Ps. iii.

innumerable souls. You may see some emitting only deep sighs, and this with gravity, and with a sad countenance, uttering malediction; so much the more plausible, as it seems to proceed unwillingly, and from a sympathizing, condoling heart. I grieve, he will say, for I love him much;—and another, I knew it well, and would never disclose it, but since others have published it abroad, I cannot deny the fact. I say it in sorrow, but it is too true. A great misfortune, truly, it is; for he can act so well, and do so much good in other respects." "Detractors are hateful to God," saith the Apostle; "and it is not wonderful, since that vice is especially opposed to charity, which is God."* Scandal, which thus inflicts death on the souls of men, flies with the rapidity of winged arrows; and Plutarch might refer to this, in alluding to the Homeric expression. "*Έρεα πρεβερτα*." "Wondrous, truly, and pitiable it is," says Richard of St. Victor, "that such a noble creature, made in the image of God, and preferred above all his works, at a slight word, a whisper, a stroke of the air, should be violently bent from the state of its rectitude, and afterwards driven about, hither and thither, as in a whirlwind."† Even independent of the eternal woe, these writers remark, that the temporal injury inflicted by detraction is beyond estimation, and that the hearer suffers equally with the speaker; for by destroying our love and reverence for other men, he deprives us of one of the chief intellectual pleasures reserved for our nature. "The demons urge us," says St. John Climachus, "either to sin, or to judge those who sin;"‡ and that, too, without being, perhaps, aware of our own guilt; for, as Cardan remarks, "*Loquacem qui fateatur, neminem invenias: qui lapsus sit verbo, infinitos*."§ Interrogate each of these uncharitable speakers, and you will understand how truly said Truth, "*Et coeperunt simul omnes excusare*." Drexelius wrote an admirable book on the vices of the tongue, against which men were assiduously warned by teachers of the middle ages. "Those who speak evil of others are excluded from the kingdom of God, according to the Apostle;"|| and what shall we say, then, of those who call their neighbour wicked, envious, rash, proud? This is the remark of St. Chrysostom in

his treatise on compunction, addressed to Demetrius.* "It is the moment of a feast, too," say these writers, "which is generally selected; it is then that we imitate the wicked man, that sat and spake against his brother; not like David, who said, 'in transitu,' all men are liars, but who sat, a sad, solemn, premeditate, and deliberate posture, that his malice might have a full blow."

Reader, we are not precisely entering upon ground already explored on a former occasion. It is true, we observed that the tone of intercourse in all societies which are not Catholic, wants meekness: but what we have to remark here is, that it wants mercy. The acute and frank Cardan makes a strange confession. "Among my vices," saith he, "I acknowledge one great and singular, that I never say any thing more willingly than what will displease the hearers; and in this I persevere, knowingly and willingly, though I am not ignorant how many enemies this alone gains for me, such is the force of nature, joined to long custom!"† Great, he might well term it, but excepting among a people of faith, far from singular vice; for it is so essentially a disposition of our fallen nature, that nothing but the supernatural influence of Catholicism can effect a complete cure. When that has not been applied, every one,—the school-boy,—the collegian,—the senator,—the man of drawing-rooms,—the loungers in public places,—the young and old,—the noble and plebeian,—all are Cardans in that respect, and might truly make the same confession, if they had his honesty. Are you about to visit a country where Luther, or Calvin, or Cranmer, or Jewell, are the names in most repute? where there is no such thing heard of by youth or age as confession?—that is, in short, where the mysteries and light of faith have been removed with the discipline of Rome? Then learn to stand constantly on your guard against malice, and the shrewdness of ill-natured criticism, and the spirit which triumphs in humiliating others, and in spoiling, by one cunningly devised blow, their day or hour of festivity. Lay aside the feeling of innocent freedom with which you had been accustomed to conduct yourself in those Catholic lands, where men were taught, from boyhood, in the words of St. Antony, "that there was no greater impiety than causing grief of any kind to others;"‡

* S. Bernardi in Cantica, Serm. xxiv.

† De statu interioris hominis, Lib. i. c. 9.

‡ Grad. X.

§ Prudent. civilis, cap. 84.

|| 1 Cor. vi.

* Lib. i. cap. 2.

† Hieron. Cardan. de Vita propria, cap. 13.

‡ Serm. S. Antonii.

where every one, young and old, rich and poor, looked and spoke as if he joyed in kindness, and were so averse to whatever could interrupt it, that, as we read of Andrew Doria, he would desist from supporting his own cause, though convinced of its justice, rather than seem to seek praise by an obstinate disputation.* You are now with men of a different type, who have revived the old civilization. The spirited and burning retort is here thought, not merely by the openly profane, but by the grave and formal, too, as characteristic of a noble nature, and every one is ready to reply, in the style of Plautus, to the unintentional offender, "Tu contumeliam alteri facias; tibi non dicatur? Tam ego homo sum quam tu." Here you will find, as occurrences of every day, such scenes as those you read about, more proper for a tragedy than a history, which once seemed rare and matchless, as at Padua, when the house of Limina, which had been ennobled by many saints, beheld the mutual slaughter of two brothers, arising not from premeditated wickedness, but from a jest; the one wishing he had as many oxen as the stars that were then shining over their heads, as they walked in the court of their palace, and the other replying, that he wished his lands were as wide as that field of sky, and asking then "where should they feed?"—hearing, instantly, "on your lands;" and then exclaiming, "without my consent?" and when "even so," was the rejoinder, neither yielding to the other, both drawing their swords, and incurring death.† Even where such deeds follow not, there is still a secret, and in heart most merciless, war maintained: all is hollow beneath your feet. These smiles and salutations are like those of the third Henry, of whom the Italian poet said,

"Si cui dixit, Ave, fuit hoc ut ab hoste cavendum."

In spirit, if not in deeds, it is again an all-hating world. Neither genius nor experience has compensated for the loss of the charity of faith: they have only formed the character which the poet describes:—

"The pride, but not the fire of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise,
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,

* Sigonii de Reb. Gest. And. Doræ, Lib. ii.
† Bern. Scand. de Antiq. Pat. Lib. iii. 13.

That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound."

The remedy which secured human life from these wounds in ages of faith, was wholly indeed derived from a divine source; but it is no less true, that many practices were instituted expressly to guard against them. The horror which such dispositions excited during the middle ages, gave rise even to certain customs, which have often been remarked as belonging to feudal manners. It is curious to find men, merely from observing that six guests could change their relative positions at table seven hundred times, leading themselves and others to reflect how many permutations of evil by the tongue might occur during the time.* The sophist, in Plato, maintains, that it was owing to the want of ability in conversation, that the custom arose with barbarous people of having music and poetry at their banquets; "for they hire," said he, "foreign sounds at a great price; but wherever the men that he admires, καλοὶ καγαθοί, met to feast in company, one never saw these players on flutes, or poets, but they were sufficient," he observes, "to entertain each other with their own voices, saying and hearing things decorously, καὶ πάντων πολλὸν ὄντος πίσσιν."† We need not at present go back to the days of Plato in search of persons who are as competent as these Athenians to entertain each other with their own voices, where there is no knowledge or remembrance of the judgment that awaiteth every idle, and consequently every suspicious, critical, detracting, calumnious, uncharitable word: but, as during ages of faith, the sense of this future day of reckoning excluded an extensive category of topics, it was found advisable, on many occasions, to return to the discipline of the barbarians, though, no doubt, from widely different motives, and to ordain that sacred readings or music should be a constant attendant on the banquet. Besides this, it was common, not alone in monasteries and bishops' houses, but in castles and secular dwellings, to inscribe lines, deprecating a breach of charity, over the table at which the guests were seated. Thus Sfondrati, the cardinal abbot of St. Gall, so late as in the seventeenth century, caused to be written on the walls of his

* Drexellii de Universis Vitiis Lingue, cap. 41.
† Plat. Protagoras.

dining-room the words which had been inscribed by St. Augustin over his own table :—

"Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere famam,
Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi."

We have had occasion, repeatedly, in the preceding books, to notice the solicitude of persons in the middle ages, like the mother of Guibert de Nogent, to profit by the warning of ascetic guides, and to refrain from criticising the character of the absent. Those moralists allowed of no distinctions, but said, broadly, from the beginning, with Thomas à Kempis, "You will never be devout, and one of the interior life, unless you resolve to be silent respecting others, and attentive only to yourself." The angelic women, who profited by these lessons, in themselves secure of censure, yet at bare report of others' failing, shrank with maiden fear; and they who heard of profanation, or abuse of holy things, were able, merely by their altered hue and looks of pity, to put to silence the intemperate speaker. It is, in truth, most curious, from the details in the ancient books, to trace the operation of charity in the conversational intercourse of life during the middle ages. Sir Thomas More, whenever he heard detraction or criticism of the absent, used to interrupt the conversation, saying, "Let every one declare his opinion, but I affirm this house to be well built;" and thus he either corrected or disturbed the calumniator.† He had well meditated on the text which induced St. Bernard to say, "whether to detract, or to hear a detractor, be more damnable, I cannot easily determine."‡ "I always had this thought present with me," says St. Theresa, "that I was never to wish nor to say anything of any creature, that I would not have them say of me. Hence, it was generally understood, that wherever I chanced to be, all absent persons were safe." Thanks to the charity inspired by the Catholic religion, in no modern language was there even a word to express that practice which Pericles ascribes to the Lacedæmonians; *τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους τὰν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπιτηδεύματῶν ὑποψίαν*—that daily malicious and suspicious scrutiny of the actions of one another in private.§ The roots of mercy and indulgence lay very

deep in the minds of men: witness the act of that brother Bernard, a monk of the Cistercian order, who hung up in his cell a picture of a profligate libertine, and wrote under it, "The portrait of Brother Bernard;" and who replied to the father master of the novices, who asked him how he came to give himself such a character, that it was from his conviction, that if the grace of God had not preserved him, he would have committed all the crimes of this person, having in himself the source and principle of them all.* "From vices in every manner he fled," says the ancient chronicle of Ansigtus, abbot of Fontanelle; "but of other men he was neither a morose censor, nor a curious investigator."† The care with which men of blessed mercy avoided charging others with any fault, is very conspicuous in the old literature. St. Bernard, having written to Peter the Venerable, complaining that he had not replied to his letters, the latter excuses himself, saying, "The cause of delay arose from the bearer, who, not finding me at Cluny, though I was not far off, being only at Marciniac, neglected to bear or send them to me; but lest I should seem to accuse a good man, I believe that he was either prevented by some business, or afraid to attempt the journey, in consequence of the extreme severity of the weather at that time; for I was detained myself during a month by the snow."‡ I cite instances from the cloister, because the monastic type, in respect to charity, was that which directed manners in all societies of the epoch, that sought to merit the character of Christian; and I cannot let this occasion pass, without observing, that it is this spirit, perhaps more than anything else, which distinguished Catholic manner from those which prevailed in countries that have abandoned the unity of faith. Other travellers, after visiting Italy, may describe her rich and majestic cities, her beautiful villas, her odoriferous shores, her enchanting lakes; may describe the enthusiasm of her people for the arts, and their inexhaustible provision for all that can ennoble and adorn the human existence; I will commemorate only the charity which reigns there. This was the great novel and distinctive phenomenon of a moral order which attracted my attention. Many English travellers in Spain and

* Hldefon. von Arx. Geschichte des. S. Gall. iii.

† Drex. de Univ. Linguae, cap. 18.

‡ De Consideratione, Lib. ii. c. 13.

§ Thucyd. Lib. ii. c. 37.

* Relations de la Mort de quelques Religieux de la Trappe, tom. ii. 189.

† Chronicon Fontanellense apud Dacher Spicileg. tom. iii.

‡ Epist. ccxxxix.

Portugal have represented a similar observation, as the most grateful result of their travels. In fact, nothing can be more striking: it comes gradually before you, but in the end, it leaves an impression indelible. Now this spirit of private society, in such countries, cannot, consistently with an accurate observation of facts, be ascribed to their geographical position, according to the suggestion of certain celebrated writers, who seem to regard all amiable dispositions as inseparable from a southern latitude. No. Such language, however it may pass with some for philosophical, is nothing but sheer absurdity. It is not climate, or nature, which has formed this master of a family, this mother, these sons and daughters, these devout and joyous families, every member of which is so loving and so humble, while surrounded, perhaps, with riches, and having, at the command of their imagination, a thousand associations, the least of which would be sufficient to fill the breasts of others with an ineffable pride, and to dictate expressions of a truly insane arrogance. It is faith, grace divine, which has made them; it is the charity of Jesus Christ which has produced this supernatural society, in which men of all degrees are found, as St. Augustin says, serving the Lord in gladness; "not in the bitterness of murmuring and of judging, but in the sweetness of love."*

We before had occasion to remark the influence of poverty of spirit upon the writers of the middle ages; and to what interesting conclusions might we come, if we were to inquire what was the influence of charity upon literature? Alas! these men of blessed mercy almost esteemed it dangerous presumption to record the virtues of the just: what would they have thought of criticising and condemning them? "To us, sitting in the narrow corner of a cell," says St. Peter Damian, in the prologue to his life of St. Romuald, "it seemed more useful to recall assiduously to the eyes of the mind our own sins, rather than compose the history of other men's virtues: it is more expedient to weep for the darkness of faults committed, than to render obscure, with unskilful words, the splendid deeds of sanctity." This was according to St. Bernard's wish; "God grant that I may enjoy peace of soul, the sweetness and repose of a good conscience, the spirit of mercy,

simplicity, and charity towards my neighbour, the gift of rejoicing with those that rejoice, and of weeping with those that weep; and I desire nothing else. All the rest I leave to the apostles, and to men truly apostolical: the tops of the mountains serve for a retreat to stags, but the holes of the rocks to hedge-hogs."* Walafrid Strabo apologizes for the warm and indignant language used by Theganus, when describing the ingratitude and baseness of the ministers who had been slaves before they were raised to the highest offices by the emperor Louis the Pious, against whom they so impiously rebelled, and remarks, that it must be ascribed to his affection for that emperor, to his excessive love for justice, and to the force of his natural zeal; being of noble birth, and having a most ardent mind, which was exasperated at beholding the insolence of men against the indulgent master, who had raised them from a servile state to honours.† The monk asks indulgence for the man born to arms, and the office of nobility. The words of St. Gregory, in his reply to Felix, a Sicilian bishop, had been a law to society during ages of faith. "Let no clerk or layman rashly reprehend bishops or superiors, even though he should see them act in a manner reprehensible. The deeds of bishops, however deserving of censure, are not to be struck with the sword of the tongue, lest, whilst convincing them of evil, other men by a consequent impulse of pride, should be precipitated into the abyss." At the same time, there is nothing more striking in the manners of the middle ages than the diligence with which all abuse of authority was provided against, the severity with which vices were denounced by holy men, and the docility with which such correction was received. The tenth sermon of Ælred,‡ addressed to the monks of Rievaulx, contains the most severe reproof of the manners of monks at that time, and it ends with these words, "video vos adhuc ad plura audienda avidos, sed parcite jam prolixo sermone fatigato."

No class of society, in our times, would tolerate a writer, who should attempt to expose its defects with the freedom which was then regarded as not only excusable, but laudable. In fact, every one knew that charity was evinced more in admoni-

* Tractat. in Ps. xcix.

* Serm. xlviii. sup. Cant.

† Thegani de Gestis Ludovic. Pii, Præfat.

‡ On Isaiah xiii.

tions, and even reproof, than in panegyric. The secular clergy of the twelfth century beheld themselves attacked, in the most unsparing terms, by Alanus de Insulis. If only the thousandth part of what he alleges were to be published by an ecclesiastic of our days, he would be inevitably set down as a dangerous and most suspicious character. What a contrast to ages of faith? This clergy of the twelfth century, so far from turning upon the author who thus treated them, conferred on him, by general consent, the title of Universal Doctor. It is true, there was no possibility of mistaking the motive of the ancient monitors, whose rule had always been conformable to the golden words of Melchior Canus:—"I spare names," says that Spanish theologian, "since the judgment of this place is concerning manners also, and not erudition alone, in which censure may be more free; for as to manners, censure ought certainly to be more cautious in regard to the living, and more reverential with relation to the dead."* When obliged to speak of the public guilt of individuals, that could not be concealed, these ancient writers testify their sorrow, and some degree of fear, at the very moment of recording it. "There was in my monastery, which is in Asia," says St. John Climachus, "a certain old man, most negligent, and little moderate, which I say, not for the sake of judging, but studying truth."† "Geraldus de Calcidia decreed himself to be abbot," says the monastic historian of one house.—"Hic male administravit monasterium. Pudor est ejus acta recensere."‡ The chronicler of St. Richarius hurries over the crimes of an evil abbot, and concludes thus:—"But it is enough to indicate the unhappiness of this man, that posterity may know how to avoid his example. Let us speak of what good he did, if he did any.—Dicamus de bono, si quid fecit.—He began to repair the tower of St. Saviour, which was in ruins; and by the alms of the faithful, the Church itself was restored. However, it was at length necessary to depose him, after an appeal to Rome. He died shortly afterwards.

Ultio non sit ei, maneat sed lux requiei. Amen."§

The great scholastic philosophers evince

* De locis Theolog. Lib. xi. c. 6. † Grad. iv.
‡ Chronicon Auriliacensis Abbat. Mabil. Vet. Analect. 350.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Richarii cap. 36. apud. Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

the same spirit as the humble chronicler. Giles of Colonna, when disapproving of any opinion of any doctor, only says, that he does not understand that sentence; and the doctor himself, without naming, he styles a great and illustrious man. Melchior Canus boils over with indignation against the golden legend, without naming the great prelate who compiled it; and in a later age, Touron chastises Fleury by remarking, that the late historian, who can see nothing great in Albert but the number and dimensions of his volumes, had probably seen nothing but their number and dimensions.* Abeillard held in the utmost horror the opinions of Roscelin; but as he had formerly learned from him the principles of dialectics, he could not bring himself to write against his old master, when urged to do so, but satisfied his zeal for religion by combating his errors without naming him in his work, entitled Introduction to Theology.

In adhering to the spirit of the blessed merciful, the writers of the middle ages were only in harmony with the readers whom they addressed. Many of them, therefore prefix to their volumes those beautiful words of St. Gregory.—"Nor are there wanting little ones who may be instructed by my sayings, nor great who can show mercy to my known infirmity. To the one I have spoken, explaining what they should do; to the others I open myself, confessing what may excite their pity. I have not withheld the medicine of words, from the former, nor have I concealed from the latter the laceration of wounds. I pray, therefore, every one who reads this book to grant me the consolation of his prayers to the strict Judge; and what he shall discover sordid in me, to wash out with tears." Such were, in general, the readers and critics whom these ancient authors had to encounter; men who would, if possible, have washed out the defects of whatever book they read with their tears.

These examples may excite surprise, from being so little in harmony with the spirit and practice of the modern civilization; but when we proceed to hear the instructions which were given continually to men in ages of faith, such astonishment will probably cease, and we shall only admire the consistency of the Catholic society, in making its practice conformable to its belief. As charity was known to be the vital principle of religion, whatever

* Vie de S. Thom. d'Aq.

indicated its decay was understood as an index of spiritual death, and denounced accordingly. Hear St. Bernard:—"Be-ware, lest you become either a curious investigator, or a rash judge of another's conversation;" and St. Bonaventura says, "Even if I should commit an act that you might condemn, judge not your neighbour; but rather excuse the intention, if you cannot the work: think it ignorance; think it involuntary; think it accidental; but if the certainty of the thing should render all dissimulation impossible, say to yourself, it was a vehement temptation; what would have become of me, if I had been similarly tried?" and in this manner, St. Bernard shows how "they that are spiritual, derive gain from everything, even from their own and others' sins, and from things hurtful and from the operations of the devil."*

To excuse oneself and believe oneself always innocent, and to accuse others as the cause of evils, was a disposition deemed so unhappy in the middle ages, that it was thought to be precisely the very sin to which the beatitude of the merciful was opposed. St. Bernard, showing that there are eight vices to correspond with the eight beatitudes, all of which were included in the sin of our first parents, remarks that the fifth is especially directed against that sin of Adam when he sought to throw his own guilt upon his wife, saying, "Mulier, quam dedisti mihi sociam, dedit mihi de ligno et comedi:"† from which men were warned by subtle words inscribed even upon tombs, as on the ancient sepulchre of Bovetinus the Mantuan in the cathedral of Padua, on which this line occurs:—

"Quam sibi plus aliis vigilans pietatis alumnus."

"There are persons," says Guy de Roye, "who can never hear the absent praised without insinuating, through envy, that they have some defect or other. This sin is so pernicious, that one can hardly pass from it to a good repentance; for it is against the Holy Ghost, who is the fountain of all good, and God saith that for this sin there will be no mercy in this world nor in the next."‡

"Never speak evil of others," says Louis of Blois, "and do not even consent by silence to the calumnies of other men;

but if you can with prudence interrupt the conversation, after the example of that holy man who said to those who accused some absent person, 'If we are not such as you describe, we ought to return thanks to God.'*" "Above all things," says St. Augustin, "take care lest you admit any suspicions into your mind, because they are the poison of friendship."† St. Bonaventura calls them a secret plague, which drives God far from us, and tears in pieces fraternal charity.‡

Totila, King of the Goths, on entering a certain city, and being met by the bishop Cassianus, remarked that the countenance of this prelate was red, and thence judged that he was a drinker, whereas he was a holy austere man. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais' Mirror, who alludes to this, has collected many examples to deter men from the vice of rash judgment,§ though the skill which enabled St. Gregory Nazianzen to detect the latent serpent in the breast of Julian before his apostacy—skill which he whose proverbs holy Church hath canonized—attributes to the prudent, and even that science which Gall and Spurzheim have revived, were not wanting in the middle ages; for of the former we find trace when Octo the jurisconsult, and father of Nicholeno the archbishop of Amalphi, is related by Marsilius Ficinus to have predicted from the countenance of his son, when a boy, that he would be a man great in religion; Leander Albertus also ascribing it to Gambarus, a sculptor and canon of St. Petronio, whom he adduces among other illustrious men to prove that Bologna had citizens who were not ignorant of that science; and of the existence of the latter, without referring to John Sanguinacio amongst the ambiguous doctors of Padua, we have evidence in a treatise composed by a Franciscan friar in the thirteenth century; yet the abuse of such researches was evidently guarded against with the greatest care. In fact, theology supplied men with a corrective, by means of which, without danger of any breach of charity, they could pursue those curious investigations which were made after the example of Aristotle, by Albert the Great, in his first book on animals; by Jerome Manfred of Bologna, in his treatise on physiognomy; by Michael Savonarola of Padua, ancestor of the great

* Instit. Spirit. cap. ii. 2.

† Lib. de Amicit. c. 24,

‡ Stimul. Divini Amoris, cap. 10.

§ Speculum Moral. Lib. i. p. 4.

* Meditat. vitæ Christi, cap. 43.

† Serm. lxi. ‡ Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

Jerome, in his *Speculum Physionomiae*; by Antonius Cermisonus, an illustrious physician, as ancient writers say; by Bartholomew Cocles of Bologna, styled a surgeon and distiller of medicines, in his *Anastasis of Physiognomy*, addressed to the most illustrious Lord Alexander Bentivoglio; and by Michael Scot. Guilielmus, a commentator on Aristotle's *Physiognomy*, quotes Galen, who observes that the bodies of animals are the instruments of the souls which are in them; and that as diverse animals have different affections, so have they members diversely disposed to follow these affections. Bartholomew Cocles, therefore, argues, that as men have different moral dispositions, so have they bodies rendered conformable to these different dispositions. Passions, he says, cannot be indulged without causing a physical alteration, which is betrayed by signs. The soul, in wondrous sort received in plastic mould, brings with her both the human and divine; while the material features assume that form which influence of the mind imprints upon them; and as the air, when saturate with showers, the casual beam refracting, decks itself with many a hue, so here, the new form on the spirit, follows still. St. Augustin supposed that the dispositions of men, and even their unuttered thoughts, might be learned from certain signs imparted to the body by the mind.* And St. Thomas remarks that the interior affections can be sometimes discovered from the countenance or the pulse.† Hence, as in the sciences, where men proceed not only à priori, or from the knowledge of causes to the knowledge of effects, but also conversely, à posteriori, from the knowledge of effects to the knowledge of causes, "so from the disposition of bodies," says Cocles, "it may be reasonably argued, à posteriori, concerning manners and disposition of mind."

Will you credit Michael Scot, and listen awhile to things that sound alien to the ordinary matter of our pages, attracted by the kind of occult power which old Romance attaches to that name? This deep investigator of nature's secrets will tell you that a small head has naturally a small brain; that if you can determine the complexion of the brain, which is indicated by the hair and by the skin, you may conjecture with probability the inter-

nal dispositions; that a high round forehead indicates a man liberal to his friends, of good understanding, tractable, and of many graces; that a flat smooth forehead argues a man litigious, vain, deceitful; a forehead too small in all parts, a foolish man, prone to anger and cruelty, a courtier; and fond of elegance; a forehead round in the angles of the temples, void of hair, a good and clever man, courageous, magnanimous, loving beauty and honour; a forehead pointed in the same parts as if bones projected, a vain, unstable, weak, and simple man; a forehead inflated as if with flesh, and full cheeks, a man irascible, proud, and of gross mind. Every member, he will assure you, has thus its signification. Thick lips denote small wisdom, and credulity; slender and drawn-in lips a man discreet in all things, secret, sagacious, and of much genius; unequal lips, a man of gross mind, slow intelligence, and of varied fortune; a chin upturned and sharp, with a hollowness in juncture of the lips, a bad, bold, proud, and envious man; a large round head, a man secret, sagacious in action, ingenious, discreet, of great imagination, laborious, stable, and a legist; a long head and unprepossessing face, a foolish, malicious, credulous, and envious man; a voluble head that moves here and there, a foolish, simple, vain, false, presumptuous man; a large head with a wide face, a man suspicious, secret, bold, and immodest. Again, he will desire you to believe that the soft, long, and slender hand signifies a man of good understanding, timid, pacific, a legist, and discreet, apt to service, domestic, and learned; the short and thick hand a man of gross mind, vain, lying, irascible, laborious; the hand which is stiff towards the end of the fingers, a man tenacious, eupidinous, thoughtful, hard to manage, and not easily brought to believe what he hears; that the slow long step indicates a bad memory, a gross mind, a confused intelligence, idle and incredulous; the quick short step, a weak man, hasty in action and imagination; the long and unsteady gait, not holding the straight way, a foolish gross man, sagacious in evil, like the wolf; needless quick movement of the members while speaking, sitting, or standing, a foul, immodest, indiscreet, evil-mouthed, vain, unstable, lying, faithless man.*

Reader, you have heard the wizard; and that such observations of themselves

* De Divinat. Dæmon. c. 5.

† Sum. 9, 57, a. 4.

* Michael Scot, Lib. *Physionomis*.

must be always dangerous, no one can doubt; though he, perhaps, of feature prominent, as Dante styles Charles, brother of St. Louis, might deem the science useful which bids him beware lest he be a man "*valde minus scientem quam se scire reputet*:" for to that peril Michael Scot declares such a configuration subjects him. But in justice to this subtle author, one should note the caution given in the very title-page, which says; "*Scientia ejus est multum tenenda in secreto*:" and also his concluding admonition to be very cautious lest you should judge any one precipitately from any one member, without attending to the result of all observations of the whole body taken together, and carefully separating from them what may be the mere result of accident or of disease. "No man," saith he, "is to be judged by the sign of one member, for one may counteract another. Therefore with discretion these chapters are to be investigated; and thus with great industry one may form one's judgment without error, if it pleaseth God." Finally, you have the theological corrective in his doctrinal note; for it saith, "When you see a humble man of red hair, faithful and tall, wise and fat, quick with leanness, simple handsome, not vain, poor, not envious, of white complexion and wise, upright and not audacious or cruel, hairy and not luxurious, having a wandering dissipated eye and not deceitful, lying, or vain, render special thanks to God alone and to his mother, for there is the operation divine." Thus, as I remarked in the beginning, the doctrines of faith preserved men in the slippery and darksome path of these inquiries, and saved them from the heavy and ridiculous falls to which they might otherwise have been exposed. Accordingly, Bartholomew Cocles, who calls physiognomy the royal science, begins his book, which he styles the Resurrection of Physiognomy, a science which, from being long dead, he has recalled to life, with the assistance of an infinite number of authors, by demonstrating *quod anima sequitur corporalem complexionem: et quod prudentia nostra evitare fata possumus*. And lest these should seem contradictory propositions, he shows that man by reason even can counteract the influence of the body; and that no one can prognosticate with certainty, but only in the way of conjecture; and he concludes with these words, which seem to contain the secret for conducting all future investigations of such physical phenomena in union with charity and faith:—"It

appears, therefore, that the corporal signs of physiognomy induce a great probability respecting the natural manners of men, although not a necessity; for man can conquer the dispositions of his nature, as did Socrates. Note that all these signs induce a great inclination, which it is difficult to obviate, although possible, as theologians also teach us—*quare concludemus voluntatem nostram sub nostræ potestatis imperio esse subjectam*."*

I cannot refrain from remarking, in conclusion, how well it would have been for many philosophers of later times, disciples of the reformed theology, if, while proposing their observations or their theories to the world, they had borrowed a sentence or two from these strange books on the infinite secrets of nature, like this that was composed in the cell of a distiller of medicines in the middle age. Their investigations might then have been pursued without contradicting the reason of all past times, and, above all, without diminishing charity, without opening fresh fountains of bitterness, to fill with suspicion, and perhaps aversion, minds that would have been otherwise, with all the joyous and generous confidence of youth, cloudless and serene.

But now, leaving Michael Scot and Cocles of Bologna, let us return to the more light-some path of moral teaching and historic proof.

Pope Pius V. is recorded to have extended the principle of resisting suspicions to the judicial administration, so that he would not attend to any informer. Two men had assured the lieutenant of his guard that they had been solicited and bribed by Cardinal Moron to assassinate the Pope. They offered such plausible evidence, that this officer believed their report, and went instantly to apprise the Pontiff; but he, instead of ordering the cardinal to be arrested, sent for him into his private chamber, and then told him what he had heard, and declared that he did not believe him to be capable of committing any crime. His confidence was proved to be well founded, and the true conspirators paid the penalty. The common voice of the whole monastic host from the time of St. Antony, declares it preferable to dwell with a blasphemer and a tyrant, than with a whisperer.† Yet the moral teachers of the ages of faith went even farther than to forbid suspicions. "Judge

* *Magistri Bartholomei Coclitis Bonon. Physiognomisti Anastasis, Lib. i. cap. 1.*

† *Sermones S. Ant. ab. x.*

not, and despise not even any public sinner," saith St. Bonaventura, "for you know not his end; and God is powerful to justify the impious and malignant."*

Memorable was the saying of Cassien, that "it is the evident index of a mind not yet purified from vice, to regard the crimes of other men without compassion, and to pass upon them the rigid censure of a judge."† "Condemn not any mortal," said the blessed father of the desert, "lest God should excrete thy prayers."‡

"Never judge rashly the sayings or actions of others," says Louis of Blois, "and you will not implicate yourself in superfluous cares; and beware how you utter or hear words of detraction. For this purpose do not pay attention to the less composed manners and deeds of others, unless compelled by the necessity of your office; for he who is curious in such matters will grow suspicious and unquiet, sour, and easily moved to anger, and while unseasonably occupied about others will forget himself. We must not immediately conclude that no men are good in a place where many are seen to live ill, nor imagine that all those are irremediably lost who are known hitherto to have led a sinful life, nor suppose that an orthodox and pious man is despised and not loved by God because he is as yet detained by some imperfections. We must not admit sinister suspicions, or suffer them to insinuate themselves into our heart, we must not believe easily evil of others, but think well of them, and interpret in the best sense all their works and words, as far as possible; and if any one has grievously sinned, a man of charity will pity him, remembering the infirmity of human nature, and the envy and malice of the devil." "He must despair of no man's conversion, but love and regard with joy all Christians as his brethren, called with him to the same celestial inheritance; and he must not attend to the villainy of the visible body in men, but to the excellent nobility and beauty of the invisible soul, for which the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only Son of God, wished to take flesh and to suffer, and to shed his blood and to die. Vehemently let him grieve that such unspeakable generosity and beauty should be degraded by negligence and polluted by sins. Let him pity, then, with the most inward commiseration all who live ill, all who are in a state of blindness, as well Christians of the right faith, as also

heretics, schismatics, and Gentiles; and let him hope for the salvation of them all with true charity."*

In the houses where religious perfection was professed, men were to overlook evil; and how could they then imagine themselves permitted to judge and condemn it in the world? "Beware how you think or speak concerning the disposition or conversation of other monks," says the blessed John of the Cross. "Whatever you may see, whatever you may hear, be not scandalized, be not astonished, but efface all that from your mind, in order that you may preserve your soul in purity and peace; for although you were to live among angels, you would judge that many things are not good, from your not knowing what was at the bottom of them. Remember the example of Lot's wife: terrified at the ruins of Sodom, she turned to see what passed there, and God, to punish her curiosity, changed her into a pillar of salt. Let that teach you that even if you should live among demons, God does not wish that you should make these turns and reflections upon their actions, since it is not your affair to take cognizance of them."† "Charity," says St. Augustin, "believes well of evil. It is pernicious when any one thinks evil of what is perchance good, through ignorance of what it is. Suppose it be evil, what do I lose by believing that it is good? What does heresy advise? It condemns the unknown; it condemns the whole world."‡ "Return to your cell and pray," was the advice which Luther received from his confessor when he disclosed his thoughts to him. He was at the point of division whence the two roads separate. Doubtless the temptation for every man is vehement at some period or other of his life, to choose, like him, the broad and beaten way of judging; but in ages of faith there were not wanting benevolent hands to raise a cross or a signal wherever there could be a doubt as to the direction, in order to intimate that the poor little narrow path of not judging was more secure, and even more agreeable to nature, after the first difficulty was surmounted; and, in fact, it quickly led those who followed it into a secret paradise; for the mind, independent of the religious recompence, soon experienced far higher pleasure in rooting out the base suspicions and judgments which rose up in it from time to time against charity, than it had ever derived

* Stim. div. am. c. 4.

† Coll. xl. 10.

‡ S. Anton. Serm.

* Ludovic. Blosius, Enchirid. Parvulorum, Lib. i. Doc. x. Append.

† Precautions against the World.

‡ Tractat. in Ps. cxlvii.

from nourishing and training them to the maturity of fruit of words and deeds. It found by experience that, as the great St. Antony says, to be a lover of men was, in fact, to live.* The discovery or invention therefore, of a good intention in acts that might have seemed injurious, imparted to it the joy of a conqueror; and to those who would have counselled deeds or deep revenge, it only answered, like that ancient king benign and meek, with visage undisturbed, "How shall we those requite who wish us evil, if we thus condemn the man that loves us?" In short, charity became an art, and was cultivated with the same delight as attends the exercise of any other art. Hence it was that men were so slow to discover scandals, or to exaggerate offences. They did not look with scowling eyes at things which cause only mirth in heaven; they contemplated nature not as Manichæans; they loved God not with the dark narrow views of those in later times, who followed the sophist of Geneva, but as Catholics: that is, they loved the just Creator and merciful Redeemer, and therefore they loved all his creatures. They loved men as men, and men as Christians. Imitators of God, other Christs, they loved even those who seemed forgetful of their Lord; for he, from the depths of love's abyss, loves even those who love him not, loves them even contaminated and deformed—not, indeed, to make them continue in that state, but to render them beautiful."†

"Why, O man," asks Marsilius Ficinus, "do you vituperate the world? The world is most beautiful, framed by the best and most perfect reason, though to you, indeed, it may be unclean and evil, because you are unclean and evil in a good world."‡ They considered, notwithstanding all the abuses that existed, how much generosity, how much justice, how much fear, how much love, dominates in the life of men; they marked the exquisite beauty and charm of the universal order, from the sports of joyous youth upon the meadow on a summer's day, to the tranquil meditation of the aged between cloistered walls faintly illumined by the dull lancet pane. Charity looked with the eyes of a painter at the different pursuits and characters of men, and apprehending thus drew a profit from all things that it saw. The expression of angel mildness in the little sister who hastens with her picture of the Madonna to place it in

her brother's boat before his departure, did not please it more than the fierce disdain of art observed in the rough figure of that brother, son of one of those Christian fishermen, as old Albertus call them, whose youthful countenance, all determined as it was, seemed ever on the point of relaxing into smiles. Charity saw a blessed martyr's spirit evinced in simple and low things; it saw the mind after God's own heart in those who, though trained up thus meanly, were innocent and holy, far beyond the trick of others; it saw constancy, courtesy, friendship, gentleness, all wildly but most sweetly growing in the illiterate children of the laborious poor, whom heretics teach men to regard with the disdain of pedants, or with a still more insulting pity; as if grace could not be theirs, merely, perhaps, because they put themselves in posture that divine nature hath suited to the words and affections of the generous.

I said that charity was an art, in regard to the pleasure attending its exercise; and the remark is just also in many other respects; for it rendered men, in regard to conversation, like skilful painters, by imparting to them that delicate tact which feels the necessity of omission as well as of creation—which is evinced in softening down all and covering over some things, casting a shade over objects of sharp brilliancy, and throwing a general, subdued, and gentle tone over the whole surface. Charity was not on the lips' edge alone, but in the heart of men who continued faithful to the Church, and therefore no one feared malicious scrutiny within the dwelling of his neighbour. None there distrusted kindness, though not promised with an oath; for the will to bless could only fail through want of power—such mercy was in human breasts. You find this remarked incidentally by many of the ancient local historians. What a delightful picture does Ambrose Leo present of the state of society in his native city in the fifteenth century? "In such harmony and friendship are the people of Nola educated," saith he, "that such things as civil feuds and party contentions are wholly unknown to them. The only combats they behold are the mimic battles of the youth, which take place annually before the beginning of Lent, the noble and plebeian promiscuously joining; and which are terminated ere the setting sun, when all are friends again, relating their exploits to one another, or enduring their defeat with good humour. You will hardly find, elsewhere, so many pairs of

* Serm. S. Ant. + *Idiotæ Contemp.* xix.

† Epist. ad Paul. Presbyt.

friends as at Nola; nor is it only between the inhabitants that friendships abound: they are equally prompt to embrace foreigners; and to this they are inclined, not through any motive of gain, but simply from the joy which they derive from the idea alone and from the friendship.*

Such representations of society abound in the old writings. One ancient author, alluding to the kindness and charity of the people of Amalphi, says that throughout the whole territory one might imagine oneself inhabiting Paradise. It was the spirit of the blessed merciful, widely diffused and presiding over all movements of the social body, which produced that concord in the state, uniting together the vast multitude of institutions and combinations resulting from Catholicism into one system of harmonious variety which seemed so admirable to the attentive observers of former times, that one who deserved to be ranked amongst them, John Baptist De Grossis, when writing the history of his native city, entitled it *Catanense Decachordum*;† as if a narrative of its manners and institutions, its calamities and its triumphs, would sound like the music of a lyre; as if each digression on a particular monastery, or church, or hospital, or confraternity of mercy, might be compared to a chord of that instrument, by the extension or contraction of which the modulation of sound would become sweeter. He strikes these chords, and we hear of the faith and piety of his countrymen—of their ancient Basilicas, in which are shrined the relics of St. Agatha. We hear of their solemn processions on the anniversaries of their martyrs, of the antiquity and beauty of their monasteries, of the sanctity and learning of the holy men within them, of the charity of abbots, of the love shown to the mendicant and all religious orders by seculars, whether priests or laics, and of their services to the poor, of the devout women, the nuns and sisters of blessed charity, of the hermits in the groves adjoining, who had given all their possessions to the poor for the love of God, of the diplomas and gifts of munificent founders, of the confraternities of laics to serve Christ in the persons of the poor, of the hospitals and asylums for the miserable, of

the colleges and schools, of the just esteem entertained for ancient families, whose highest nobility is derived from having so long deserved the love and admiration of their country, of the gifts of nature, of the works of art, to which the words of holy Jerome are so applicable, that things revolve in this circle, that men should bear one another's burdens, and that the sweat of the dead should be the delight of the living, of the deep religious feeling with which they loved and defended their country, so well expressed in those lines upon the shrine of the virgin martyr, the patron of their city—"Ubi orta et passa, regressa sum, quia nimis dilexi eam, et qui mecum hanc non amat patriam, quæ mea est, me odit,"—and by those inscribed over the city gates—"Noli offendere patriam Agathæ,"—the words, it is said, which thrice presented themselves in the eyes of the emperor Frederick II. in a book of prayer which fell into his hands while resolved upon levelling Catana to the ground for its fidelity to the Roman pontiff, and which filled him with such fear that he relinquished his cruel intentions, and withdrew. The chanter proceeds, and we hear of the palace of the senators, where the robed magistrates, the mitred fathers, the steel-clad heroes, and the illustrious citizens, are represented in ancient paintings; we hear of their loyal fidelity to their princes, of the innocent manners of their youth, of the sanctity of their great men, of the solicitude of their pastors, from St. Everius to Martinus de Leon then living, whose charity forms the last tone.

Reader, do you not perceive how easy it was for this minstrel to fulfil what he promised, and how confidently he might predict that his book would resemble the music of a lyre, at one time perhaps causing tears, at another joy, but never awakening jealousy or envy, or other foul passions, or exciting any affections excepting those of a heart that seeks satiety in love? So it is with all such historic representations of a Catholic state during ages of faith: they resemble harps, which you may strike boldly without fearing to conjure up a bad spirit, touch what chord you will. They form, in fact, a most sweet and unearthly symphony, which, whether plaintive or joyous, is always sure to leave the souls of the listeners more tuned to reverence and pity, more loving and devoted—deeper imbued, in short, with the charity of heaven.

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, Lib. i. c. 13. iii. 13, in *Thesaur. Antiq. Ital.* ix.

† *Thesaur. Antiq. Italicæ et Siciliæ*, tom. x.

CHAPTER III.



IRUE love, that ever shows itself as clear in kindness as loose appetite in wrong, was not a principle confined to the breasts or tongues of those that cherished it. During the ages of faith, it was developed exteriorly in a great variety of works, and necessarily comprised action, insomuch that with ancient writers we find the term work used as synonymous with charity; of which you have an instance in the advice which Michael Scot gave to the Emperor Frederic II.: "Sis amicus Dei, fide, spe, et opere."* Since, according to the sentence of the wise, the life of man from youth is prone to sin and obnoxious to divers defilements of vice, there are proposed to him, as Pope Innocent says, many works of charity, that where diversity of diseases hath prevailed the remedies for them may be multiplied.†

Love being the universal principle of good, it would be long to describe its effects. The ancient philosopher sought to illustrate this by citing poetry as an example. "Do you not know," saith he, "that poesy is something multiplex?—*ἔστι τι πολὺ*; for it is the cause of every thing that is made; so that all works in every art belong to poesy, and all that thus work are poets; and yet they are not called poets, but have other names; because what we call poetry is something cut off from the whole of poetry, and confined to one part, which consists in music and metre. In like manner, love is the desire of all good and happy things, though men have confined the use of the word to one part only."‡

You perceive, reader, that nothing can be more in accordance with the voice of theologians than this passage; for, as the universal doctor saith, "charity binds those that are proximate, draws together those

that are far asunder, reduces plurality to unity, diversity to identity; this is a concordant dissonance, and united plurality, an accordant dissent, an harmonious variety; this is the tunic of Christ, woven throughout without seam—the tunic of Joseph of many colours."* "Be it known," says an author of the thirteenth century, whose moral mirror has been ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, "that although the mercy of God is one essentially, since that God is one, yet is it multiplex in effect; so that we read, 'Thy mercies are many, O Lord!' and 'Many are his mercies'—truly so many that no one can tell them, *quis sapiens et intelliget misericordias Domini?*"† In this respect, Catholic manners were to be multifiform and simple, so that truth and beauty were both secured.

"Therefore," says Richard of St. Victor, "you who wish to be always in contemplation know not to be clothed like the mystic queen of virtues, in a garment of variegated colours. One seeks to be assiduous in prayer, without perceiving that charity wishes to be adorned with variety. Whoever is delighted only with one work, however precious, has not the ornament of charity, which is clothed with variety."‡ In what manner does the charity of the blessed merciful force itself upon an historian's notice? and in connexion with what subjects that fall within his range of inquiry does it pass before him? This is an interesting question, that will lead to results, as far as the middle ages are concerned, widely different from what the majority of readers at present are inclined to suppose; for whoever would study their history with impartiality and erudition, must come eventually to this conclusion—that while, like all other pages in the annals of mankind, it is stained with blood and tears, what is peculiar to it is a supernatural display of mercy. If when visiting under its guid-

* Liber Physiognomiae quæ compilavit magister Michael Scotus, Lib. i. Prohem.

† Epist. tom. iii. Lib. xvi. 124.

‡ Plat. Conviv.

* Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicat. cap. 21.

† Vincent. Bellov. Speculum Morale, Lib. l. p. iv. 10.

‡ Richard S. Vict. in Ps. xlv.

ance tribunals, prisons, and battle-fields, he must be often led to exclaim, with Shakespeare,—

“Here’s much to do with hate,”—

he will be constrained, even in the darkest scenes, to add with the same poet,—

“But more with love.”

Perfectly to develop this truth, would require more than a volume; but sufficient details will be found in this Seventh Book to show, at least, in what manner this may be done; to expose the prodigious error and injustice of modern opinions respecting Catholic manners; and to convince every impartial reader, that in relation to mercy as well as justice, the men of former times stood pre-eminent amongst the blest.

Here, no doubt, would be a fitting occasion to speak of those immense labours undertaken for the spiritual good of mankind, in very early times by the Benedictine saints, and in later by the Dominican and Franciscan friars, and by the Jesuits, all heralds and dispensers of the mercy of God, who made the offering of their repose, their health, their liberty, and their lives, in order to preach the gospel to barbarous nations. The subject, however, rather belongs to a different order of observations from that which we are pursuing. In the last Book, moreover, an illusion was made to the missionaries; and in a future volume we must unavoidably meet with them again, when accompanying the peaceful children of St. Benedict through the forests and mountains of the north. I quit this path, therefore, for the present, to follow a way that keeps nearer to the level of ordinary life and manners.

It may be well, perhaps, in the first instance, to remark, that the simple symbolic forms of government, whether monarchical or republican, which prevailed during ages of faith, were more favourable to the development of mercy in public measures, than the complicated oligarchical constitutions, which the ambition of a powerful minority, discarding all supernatural views, has attempted, in later times, to establish in their place, upon interests purely material. An English writer, who had studied the course of affairs around him during the civil wars, and the usurpation of Cromwell, made the observation, that the very constitution of a multitude seems not so inclinable to save as to destroy. “Rulers,”

he says, “in aristocracies, or popular states, are never seen to forgive.” He looked back, probably, to Pagan times, when certainly no one but a Cleon would ever have accused a democracy of being too inclined to change when it was to show mercy.* Many popular governments in the middle ages, exhibited a striking contrast to such representations, evincing evangelic mercy to their enemies; but, at all events, the experiment was made during a longer interval, and on a much greater scale, in the monarchies than in the republics of Christendom. How many splendid instances do we find of forbearance and long suffering exercised by sovereigns in the ages of faith, who had heard it proclaimed on all sides, that mercy and truth should guard the king, and that by clemency his throne should be established? How full of mercy was the emperor Lewis the Pious, how slow to anger and quick to forgive, never refusing pardon, whatever might be the provocation! What examples of this in his conduct towards Berca, count of Barcellona, convicted of high treason, as also towards those who followed the party of his son Lothaire, as well as towards a multitude of others! “*Tardus ad irascendum, facilis ad miserandum*,” says Theganus, of this great emperor; and the astronomer, who lived in his palace, and who wrote his life, observes, that along with magnanimous fortitude, he evinced a merciful meekness, to a degree, that was almost beyond what is attainable by human nature.† Such, again, was that Charles the Bald to whom Pope John wrote, saying, “*ab infantia crevit vobiscum miseratio*.”

It is curious to observe how this disposition was estimated in later times, and to hear Luther, on the revolt of the peasants, blaming the patience of Duke John of Saxony, and saying, that he had formerly learned from monks, his confessors, to support the disobedience of his subjects.‡ The King Don Emmanuel of Portugal one day returned thanks to a man for having discovered reasons why a certain criminal should not be put to death; and Don John III., king of the same Portugal, assisting at a judgment, and observing that the voices were equally divided, on being asked to give his own, replied, “You have done right in finding him guilty, and the others ought to have been of your opinion; but,

* Thucyd. Lib. iii. 37.

† Vita et actus Lud. Pii, apud Duchesne, tom. ii.

‡ Michelet Mem. de Luth. II.

nevertheless, my voice shall absolve him ; for it must not be said, that by the single voice of the king, a subject has been condemned to death.*

The early history of Spain presents a memorable example of the same kind. Shortly after the coronation of Wamba, at Toledo, a conspiracy was formed by certain nobles in Catalonia, which was soon manifested in open rebellion. The king sent an army against them, under the command of Paulus, a distinguished general ; but no sooner had this traitor arrived at the quarters of the rebels, than he declared himself one of their number, and persuaded his troops to pass over with him into Gaul. On their approaching Narbonne, Argebadus, the Archbishop, at first closed the gates against them ; but being unable, rather than unwilling, to make an effectual resistance, the rebel army took possession of the city. Then Paulus harangued the troops, and having declared Wamba to be dethroned, was himself saluted King of the Goths. On receiving intelligence of what had occurred, Wamba hastily passed the Pyrenees, and the two armies came to battle near the city of Narbonne, when victory declared for the legitimate king. On his advance to enter the city, the Archbishop was deputed to go out, and intercede for the vanquished. At the fourth stone from the gate, he met the king, and immediately alighting from his horse, presented himself as a suppliant. His address was affecting. "Pity," he said, "O king, men who, through ignorance, or the common calamity of the times, or by an insuperable force of fate, have fallen into this crime. The greater their treason, the greater will be your glory if you have mercy on them." Wamba, in warlike acts equal to any former king, was surpassed by none in clemency. "Moved by your entreaties," he replied, "I grant these men life ; but lest the absolution of wickedness should be interpreted, as if there were to be impunity, hereafter, for all offences, the chiefs of the rebellion must suffer the punishment which I deem necessary for preserving the dignity of the empire." The Archbishop proceeding to urge him further, and to implore a complete pardon, the king closed his mouth, saying, "Does it not seem enough to have suffered the culprits to live ? We have pardoned you, Archbishop, because you were unwillingly accessory to the revolt ; but as for these men, let them think it sufficient gain to have escaped ignominious death."

* Savedra Christian Prince, tom. ii. c. 85.

Then the king entered the city, and at the head of the troops, commanded Paulus to be degraded from all military honour ; after which, he led him back a prisoner into Spain, along with the other chief conspirators ; and, on entering Toledo, Paulus was led in triumph, wearing a black leather crown on his head, and then, with the others, was consigned to perpetual imprisonment. All this is related by Julian, the Archbishop, and repeated by Mariana. If the doom should be thought severe, we must, at the same time, acknowledge, that there is no government existing at the present day which would not, under such circumstances, have inflicted death. Much importance, however, should not be ascribed to any form or accident of government ; although one cannot avoid being struck with the fact of the insensibility of all democratic states, but such as are purely and fervently Catholic, to the suffering of persons who are not in harmony with their views. It was a singular trait of magnanimity which Socrates ascribed to his countrymen, after relating their determined contest against the king, when he says, that they prepared themselves to make war for freedom, but that they forgave those other states who chose his alliance, thinking, that with their humble means of defence, it was allowable for them to seek safety in any way whatever.* In general, for neither persons nor states, would there, under such circumstances, be any mercy. In our time, the gates of Spielberg have opened at the voice of an emperor, while those of Ham remained closed, under a system of rule professedly popular, and in pursuance of a sentence which is said to have been the work of no one ; from which it is but natural to infer, that a prisoner may have more to hope from a personal enemy, than from a cold and passionless abstraction, though supported by men who are continually repeating the words philanthropy, moral progress, and beneficence.

Leaving, however, such points, let us attend to the maxims of government, and judicial administration, which were universally received during the ages involved in this history. St. Augustin had shown, that mercy was to attend justice, even in the formal decision of the civil tribunal ; and commenting on the words of Solomon, *noli esse justus multum*, had said, "the law, because it cannot mitigate itself, must be mitigated by us, in order that it may benefit those acting under it. He, therefore, is

* Paneg. 60.

not just to excess, who is an imitator of God."* Pelisson, in defending Fouquet, reminded the king of this doctrine, and also appealed to the oath which he had taken at his coronation, in face of the altar, before heaven and earth, angels and men. "Item ut in omnibus judiciis æquitatem et misericordiam præcipiam; ut mihi et vobis indulgent suam misericordiam clemens et misericors Deus." Kings, therefore, were anointed with oil, that they might be, as it were, consecrated with the unction of mercy;† and, consequently, in the rescripts of Arcadius and Honorius, and in the edicts of Constantine, the imperial office is expressed by the terms "tranquillity, and serenity." St. Cyril, of Alexandria, reminds the Emperor Theodosius, that it becomes his dignity to possess a serene and placable mind. "A prince who would know all things," says Vincent of Beauvais, "must pardon many."‡ The office of chancellor, and of a court of equity, is thus described by Hincmar:—"If any cause should be such, that the worldly laws should not have provided for it in their definitions, or that, according to the custom of the Gentiles, they should have ordained statutes with more cruelty in regard to it, so that the rectitude of Christianity, or holy authority, could not justly consent to them, it must, in that case, be transferred by the court of the palace to the moderation of the king, in order that he, along with those who have the knowledge of both laws, and who justly fear more the statutes of God's law, than those of human laws, may so determine it, that where both can be preserved, both may be preserved; but where the law of the world deserves to be repressed, the justice of God may be preserved." The universal doctor, who flourished in the twelfth century, speaks more strongly still to rulers, in recommendation of mercy.—"O man, in the misery of another recognise thyself. If thou art just, thou canst fall; if wise, the wisdom of man has no constancy. Thou who hast experienced in God the fountain of mercy, should at least suffer the streamlet of compassion to flow to thy neighbour. What will it be if thou, to whom thy Saviour has been clement and pious, shouldst be pitiless and austere to thy fellow-men? In the mercy of God, thou canst read what thou oughtest to do in holding the rule of clemency, and certes thou shouldst rather em-

brace mercy than justice; for every man ought to be naturally more inclined to mercy than to justice, for mercy produces love, but justice fear; and love is more worthy than fear, since charity excludes fear. There are many things which admonish us to relax somewhat from justice;—the infirmity of human nature,—the utility of the thing,—yea, the very dignity of mercy, which exalteth judgment. Let mercy arise, therefore, not from negligence, not from pusillanimity, not from indiscretion; but let it be, in every respect, so circumscribed, that it may retain its own property, and infringe not upon other virtues. Behold, O man, in Joseph, mercy which forgets the injustice of his brethren;—in David, the grace of clemency, which weeps for the madness of his persecuting son. If thou shutteth the bowels of thy mercy against others, thou shuttest the door of the mercy of Christ against thyself; for mercy is the key which unlocks heaven. This is the gate of the Lord; the just shall enter it. It is mercy which illuminates the New Testament, and mitigates the rigour of the ancient law; this is the wood which sweetens the ocean wave; this is the salt with which Elisha exterminated the bitterness of the waters; this is the meal which Elisha used against death. Clemency is the ornament of princes. O man, where wilt thou appear, unless clemency should come to thy assistance? What will be thy punishment, if God should execute justice in thy regard? Be not avaricious, therefore, in dispensing mercy; for thou hast thyself experienced the largess of mercy in God."* The docility of magistrates in attending to the suggestions of the merciful, and in recognising constantly their own responsibility to a divine judgment, is often presented in a most remarkable manner during the ages of faith. Witness a scene in Venice, in the year 1552. At a time when the tribunal of Quarantia was assembled, in which the doge, with the senators, sat to determine causes of life and death, lo! a hermit, a friar, enters the hall of judgment, crying out, with a terrific voice, "To hell shall go all who do not administer true justice;—to hell the mighty who oppress the poor:—to hell the judges who shed the blood of the innocent." After the first emotions of surprise, this intruder was recognised to be Matthieu de Bassio, a Capuchin friar, who, two years before, had exercised in Venice the evangelic ministry,

* In Quest. Vet. Test. Q. 15. iv.

† Cresolii Anth. Sac.

‡ Speculum Doctrinal.

§ Rem. aa. c. 21.

* Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 18.

with an admirable zeal and courage. He was known in that city as a holy stranger, intrepid in admonishing sinners, constant in preaching, spending his days in works of mercy, and, having no habitation, his nights under the portico of St. Mark, or of the Rialto, or under the campanile of the church of St. Moses. After a short sleep on the ground, or on the little tables of the merchants, he used to pass the remaining hours of darkness before the church-doors in prayer. He had been accustomed to enter frequently the courts of the tribunals, denouncing eternal woe on all who suffered the poor to be oppressed; and sometimes he indicated clearly enough, that there was somewhat to correct in the administration; so that the government, feeling his correction too sharp, under pretence of placing him in a position to do more good, decreed that he should remove to preach at Fossacodia, which is a city in the Venetian territory, not far distant; and two years had elapsed since his removal thither, when he made his appearance in this manner before the tribunal. The doge, being displeased at such an interruption, made signs to the officers of the vestibule, that they should eject him from the hall; but Sebastian Venerius, one of the illustrious senators, interposed, and turning to the doge and other senators, said, "Most serene prince, and conscript fathers, we are constituted by God judges in this republic; and what ought to be more desired by us in our administration of justice, than that we should be admonished of our duty by celestial messengers? This is a most serious judgment, for another sentence can be corrected; but that which deprives men of life is immutable. Here we cannot take counsel with too much deliberation, and these words of the holy man merely recall to our minds how important and perilous is the office which we discharge. And though there is to us all, by the benignity of God, that rectitude of mind which would hold in horror a wilful violation of justice, yet, on account of many causes, our judgment may sometimes sleep. And now, if God should have sent this man, and destined him as an angel to our city, that he should awaken us from sleep, ought he to be driven out thus, or is the divine benefit of admonition to be rejected, because we judge the man who conveys it to be sordid, estimating his mind from the habit which he wears? Far be such scorn from us senators, who are disciples of the humble fisherman."

These words of Venerius made such an impression on the assembly, that the friar had permission, from that day forward, to repeat his imprecations wherever he pleased. This Venerius was he who, subsequently, commanded the fleet of the republic, to whose prudence and vigilance the glorious victory over the Turks, in 1571, was partly ascribed; and who finally attained to the supreme honours, being elected doge in 1578.* With historic truth, many of the Venetian princes are represented, in the palace of the dukes, in solemn paintings, in company with saints and angels, adoring the Saviour; and thus the mystery of all this is explained.

The kings of Portugal had made the archbishops of Bragua lords of that city and territory, so that the civil, as well as ecclesiastical, jurisdiction belonged to them. They had their criminal courts, therefore, and their chamber of justice; and the directions which these magistrates received, respecting their administration, would throw great light upon the history of judicial manners in ages of faith. The discourse which Bartholomew de Martyribus addressed to them, on being raised to that see, was truly pathetic. He besought them to aid him in dispensing prompt and effectual justice, that the poor might have the same facilities as the rich; and adding, that he came not to complain of them, but, moved by pastoral charity, to remind them, that it is a great thing for a man to be judged by a man, and still greater for a Christian to be judged by a Christian. "The Pagans," said he, "recognised the first truth, and the holy Scripture teacheth the second. You are the judges of your brethren, and God is your Judge, to whom you must one day render a strict account of every sentence that you render here. How must not man tremble," he added, "when he considers, in a criminal cause, that his opinion can deprive a man of life? I know that there is, at times, a necessity to constrain you, and that one must not arm licence by the hope of impunity; but, O, let humanity and gentleness never be put aside, even when justice must prevail."† Thomas Carbonel, bishop of Sigüenza, being also the temporal lord of that city, used to obviate the necessity of having recourse to the tribunals, by his personal efforts in reconciling enemies, and

* *Annales Capucinarum*, an. 1552.

† *Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 31.*

terminating disputes; and when some interested officers complained that many faults were left, in consequence, unpunished, the bishop replied, that the parties being satisfied, order re-established, and public peace preserved, one ought to be content, whatever were the means employed.*

Independent, therefore, of any natural cause, we must perceive, from such examples as these, that as the monarchies of Europe had been, in a great measure, originally the work of the Episcopal order, there was reason to expect, that a larger proportion of the spirit of mercy should enter into their composition than could have ever been developed under any previous state of human society. St. Bernard's work, "*De Consideratione*," was recommended, in the middle ages, as a manual for all rulers, who might learn from it how they ought to examine themselves, in order to estimate their own advance in virtue. The questions proposed to Pope Eugene, were such as these:—"Have you made proficiency in sweetness of manners? Are you more patient, more lenient, more easily entreated, more clement, more discreet?"† Pope Gregory IX. made St. Raymond de Pegnafort his own confessor; and Clement VIII. testifies, that the usual penance which he imposed on that pontiff, was to hear, with benignity, the prayers and just complaints of those who were without protection, and to expedite the cause of widows and orphans.‡ Such were the men who were at the side of kings in the middle ages, ever labouring to calm, to mitigate, to preserve. Geoffroy de Beaulieu, the Dominican confessor to St. Louis during twenty-two years, wishing to console that devout king on the death of his mother, and to give his mind some distraction, used to propose, we are told, some works of mercy for him to perform.§ "After trial, and just judgment," says an ancient historian, of Normandy, "Pandulf, Prince of Capua, was condemned to death; but, by the prayers of the Archbishop of Cologne, the emperor was persuaded to remit the sentence."|| To the last, the clergy were faithful to their blessed rule. Cornelius Agrippa acknowledges, that the Emperor

Charles V. would have certainly put him to death, if he had not been prevented by the intercession of the bishop of Liege, and of Cardinal Campegio.* Those privileges of clergy, of which we hear so much, have been strangely misinterpreted by many modern writers. If the Irish synod, in the eighth century, whose decrees were published by Dacherius, declares that no one must presume, without the bishop's permission, to cite any clerk before a secular judge,† the same synod decrees, that for similar offences, the punishment of clerks should be double of that which would be incurred by laics.‡

In the ecclesiastical courts men found science and charity. From their codes the pains of death and mutilation were banished. If their jurisdiction extended not only over the clergy and their numerous vassals, but also beyond all limits that could seem assignable to them, the reason must be sought in public confidence, and in the mercy of the Church, which co-operated with the efforts of the poor people to escape from the rigour and corruption of the secular tribunals. At the same time it should be remembered, that if the law towards some classes was weak, religion was firm and uncompromising; that these privileged persons were subject to the tribunal of penance; and that the canons of the church forbade absolution where wrong had been committed, unless the best satisfaction possible followed. Besides, let it be observed, if the sanctuaries afforded a refuge to the criminal, he was not sure of impunity. A certain time only was allowed, till his friends could prove his innocence, or, if guilty, engage to pay the pecuniary compensation. Nor was this protection awarded to all; for some criminals might be dragged from the very altar, to receive the punishment of their crimes.

We beheld the penitents before amongst the blessed mourners, and here again we catch a glimpse at them as criminals, suffering the pains enjoined by apostolic authority. Now, reader, think within thyself how any fear and execration of guilt could be inspired greater than by the sight of what thou mayest see in this place though death is not seen. The wretch who moves this way is Lombard, a layman soldier of the Count of Catana. Barefoot he

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. v. liv. 39.*

† *De Consideratione*, Lib. ii. c. 11.

‡ *Clemen. VIII. in Bull. Con. n. 16.*

§ Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. 3.*

|| *L'Ystoire de li Normant. Lib. i. c. 24.*

* In *Querela super Calumn. Scholast. et Monach.* + Lib. xx. cap. 26.

† *Id. Lib. xxviii. cap. 7.*

walks, his hand armed with rods, having his legs and arms naked, and his countenance distorted in such guise that the tongue hangs out like an ox that licks his nostrils; but on looking nearer, one perceives that it is pulled without the lips by means of a slight cord, of which the other end is fastened to the neck. In this state he has with haste returned to his country. During fifteen days he must continually show himself upon his own lands where he was born, and upon the land where his crime was perpetrated; and on reaching the entrance of the churches, he must refrain from going farther; he must prostrate himself upon the earth outside, and from his own hand receive the discipline. And thus, in absolute silence and fasting, he is obliged to pass each day till after vespers, when he takes bread and water sufficient to sustain nature; and after the time allotted he is to depart for the Holy Land, where he must serve in the Christian army during three years, fasting until the last every sixth feria on bread and water. He cannot speak, to tell thee of his crime; but the public voice proclaims it. This is the man who, being in the army of the Count of Catana, and present at the storming of the castle in which the Bishop of Catana was made prisoner, was constrained by some of the count's soldiers to cut out that prelate's tongue; for which barbarous act the third Innocent hath imposed upon him the penance which you behold him suffering.* The next that follows hath to endure longer misery. Barefoot he also walks, clad in a woollen tunic and a short scapular, having a penitential staff of the length of one cubit in his hand. His famished looks move you to pity; but lo! he refuses your generous alms, and will accept but that poor pittance which will suffice to procure food essential to sustain nature for one day, as he is forbidden to take more from any one. Henceforth to his death he must never taste flesh, whatever be his necessity or disease; and on every sixth feria, as also on the second and fourth during Lent, he fasts on bread and water. In one place he must never remain for two successive nights; and during three years he must visit the thresholds of the saints, without presuming to enter the churches until he has received the discipline prostrate. One hundred and twenty times each day the prayer of our Lord must pass his lips with due atten-

tion, while his knee humbly bends between each pause; and when three years are expired he is ordered to return to the apostolic see, to ask for mercy. Meanwhile, however, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, to whom the chief pontiff's letters have come greeting, are enjoined to show mercy to the miserable, opening to him in his necessity the bowels of commiseration. O holy Church of Rome! how wonderful the art which thou dost manifest in the evil world, tempering severity with mercy!—how just a meed allotting by thy virtue, unto all! This penitent, by name Robert, came to the holy see, confessing with tears and groans his dreadful sin, and relating that when captured by the Sarassins, and confined with his wife and daughter, there came an order from the chief, that in consequence of the want of food, whatever captive had a child should kill it; on which occasion, being pressed by famine, he killed his daughter and ate her flesh; and when, a second time, there were similar orders given, he killed his wife, though of her flesh he durst not partake. Pope Innocent, disturbed, as he declares, by his horror of such a crime, hath imposed upon him this penance.* Had we time to stay longer here, of such penitents many a flock we should behold, all weeping piteously, to different laws subjected—living witnesses to the world how greatly should be feared the vengeance of Heaven!

There are many occasions on which we must remark that the systematic opposition to the influence of the holy see, and of the ecclesiastical power in general, was always accompanied with a disposition to exercise greater severity in the punishment of criminals. It is a fact not a little curious, that the reign, of St. Louis should have been distinguished for the celebrated measures which are supposed to be the foundation of what are termed the liberties of the Gallican Church, and also for the publication of the "Establishments," in which the penalties seem so wantonly rigorous, and according to which justice was to be administered with such extreme severity. Stephen Pasquier, who even in this instance shows his disinclination to ultramontain principles, says that the gibbet is one of the chief means by which a republic remains calm and without trouble.†

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. v. 77.

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. v. 78.

† Recherches de la France, Liv. viii. 40.

So taught not men in earlier times of faith. St. Augustin writes to Count Marcellinus in behalf of certain criminals, and says, "Notwithstanding the greatness of their wickedness, I implore you that their penalty may be less than death, on account of our conscience, and on account of Catholic mildness. Lest they should incur the pain of eternal judgment, we desire that they may be corrected, not slain." Although the Church had to denounce the error of certain heretics, who maintained that men ought never to be put to death by human laws, for this was one of the maxims of the Waldenses, which Alanus de Insulis refuted in the twelfth century, it is certain that the Catholic mildness of which St. Augustin speaks would have found much in the earlier codes conformable to its desires.

The pain of death seems hardly to have been contemplated in the eighth century, by the legislators of Ireland, of whom we have already heard. The penalty of a wicked man's crime, say they, is first to fall upon his substance; if he has no substance, then upon his land; if no land, then upon his lord; if no lord, then upon the man, who gave him arms and clothes, or who gave him food and a bed; and if no such person should be discovered, it falls upon the chief ruler of the province.* If, however, the Church hath given meat to the criminal, his penalty falls not upon her, though she may have given it to an evil man—"quia Columba vera est; Columba autem non suis tantum pullis ministrat, sed omnibus avibus aperientibus os suum."†

Pecuniary compositions for crimes was a prominent feature of all the ancient Germanic codes, which proves the anxiety of those legislators to stay the bloody hand of revenge; and it has been justly remarked, that, to make the acceptance of a fine obligatory on the party aggrieved, in nations amongst whom the deadly feud had been so long known, was a wise and a humane measure. If the minute graduation of these compositions should at first seem ridiculous, we should consider, as the same writer observes, that this anxiety to fix a scale of compensation for every possible crime, effectually prevented the infliction of arbitrary or oppressive penalties. Childebert decreed, that for deliberate homicide the pecuniary compensation

should cease, and that *qui injuste novit occidere, discat juste mori*. This decree, however, had little effect; but the Carolingians renewed it, and assigned death, though the history of Charlemagne proves that in regard to the worst criminals he generally commuted death into seclusion within the walls of a monastery. The correspondence between St. Augustin and Pope Gregory the Great presents an interesting illustration of the mildness which the ecclesiastical influence was prompt to infuse into the legislature. To the question what punishment is to be inflicted on stealers from a church, St. Augustin replies that a distinction should be made between those who steal through want, and those whom want does not effect, and that the number of stripes must be proportioned accordingly. Yet even when the crime was more aggravated, he enjoins that the chastisement be applied in love, not in anger, lest a soul should be sent to the fires of hell. "In our corrections of the faithful," he adds, "we must imitate worldly parents, who, though they inflict pain on their sons, yet design these sons to possess their inheritance. Thou askest what amount of compensation will satisfy the Church? God forbid that the Church should gain from her losses—that she should profit from crime!" Yet in all ages the Church was anxious that strict justice should be maintained; and here we may remark the action of mercy in facilitating the redress of the poor, who could always find speedy satisfaction by applying in person to the highest authorities at once, without either incurring delay or expense. The example of St. Louis sitting under the oak of Vincennes is well known, but the clergy led the way here. St. John the Almoner, patriarch of Constantinople, used to place a chair and table before the Church on the fourth and sixth ferias, in order that the poor might approach him without obstacle for a decision of their causes, saying, that if men entering the Church wished to be heard quickly by God in their affairs, they ought before entering, to hear the poor quickly, and give them satisfaction. It was by the advice of St. Dunstan that King Edgar exhibited new zeal in the discovery and punishment of the numerous criminals who, during the late domestic troubles, had so long agitated the kingdom. But the sword of justice was seldom unsheathed. Banishment, whether for a period or perpetually, was the usual penalty of crime. On one

* Recherches de la France. Liv. xli. cap. 28.

† Dacher. Spicileg. tom. ix. Id. cap. 29.

occasion, however, St. Dunstan inquired of the people whether justice should not be done on three criminals, then in custody, convicted of coining false money. As the day was a high festival, and the primate was about to celebrate mass, the reply was that justice had better be deferred. "Not so," said the archbishop; "I know of no crime more injurious to society than the one committed by these men; nor will I approach the altar until they have suffered the penalty decreed by the laws. My conduct may seem cruel, but God knows my motive. I have a duty to fulfil towards the widow, the orphan, and the poor, who have been injured by these criminals. I must not, by false notions of mercy, remit or suspend the legal penalty; for by so doing, I encourage others to crime." Eadmer, however, observes, that his heart belied his words; that he wept while the malefactors suffered the legal punishment; but that when justice was done, he washed his face and advanced with a more cheerful countenance to the altar.

St. Vincent Ferrier similarly gave proof not alone of mercy, but of a love of justice and regard to the interests of society. It happened, while he was at Genoa, that a malefactor who was of Valencia, his own native city, was arrested, convicted of many crimes, and condemned to death. Several persons prayed him to use his interest with the doge or the senate to gain freedom for this man. A word from him would have opened the prison doors; but he judged that such mercy would have been a false virtue, and contented himself with saving the prisoner's life and having his sentence commuted in such a manner that he would have space for penance, and yet society be secured from a renewal of his crimes.*

The capitularies of Charles the Bald evinced great zeal and rigour in the punishment of robbers, who, if they fled into a different kingdom, were liable to be seized there and sent back to the judges of the state where the crime was committed.†

The counsel of St. Bernard to Pope Eugene was conformable to these examples. "You will not be innocent," he says, "if either you punish him who ought perhaps to be spared, or spare him who ought to

be punished."* When Theobald Noterius fled to Rome, after procuring the murder of Thomas Prior, of St. Victor, at Paris, St. Bernard wrote to Pope Innocent in these terms:—"The wild beast that hath devoured Joseph is said to have applied to you for assistance, as if the seat of highest equity were a den of lions. He flies to the bosom of a mother, though still wet with the blood of her son. If he seeks penance, it is not to be refused to him; but if it be an audience that he demands, let him have such as blessed Peter gave to Ananias and Sapphira, for the voice of a brother's blood cries against him from the earth."†

But even of the basest criminals the doom was not without much weeping sealed; and where the punishment of death was awarded, its execution was certainly attended with very different symptoms in society from those which are at present observable in countries where the principles and manners of faith have been superseded. A recent traveller, who beheld the execution of a murderer at Turin, remarks, that amidst the multitude present he does not believe there were twenty women, and those of the lowest description.‡ Pity, not curiosity, moved the rest, on hearing of the vengeful doom, though just.

St. Chrysostom remarks, that when the patriarch and his family had entered the ark, God closed its door with the same hand as that with which he made the world; adding, "Nor did he permit those within to behold what passed without, for this reason, that although those who perished were most wicked, yet the minds of good men have great compassion, even when they see the guilty punished; and therefore the Father of the human race consulted the consolation of a piteous and holy man, in not allowing him to see the destruction of sinners."§

The use of torture had come down from the Pagans. Its having been continued through the middle ages must be ascribed to the fact that the legislation had not been wholly delivered from the old error. It does certainly seem strange, and a just cause for profound humiliation, that so long a time should have been necessary to convince all just men of the inconsistency of such contrivance horrible with the

* Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. iii. Liv. xvii.

† Capit. Car. Calv. Duchesne, tom. ii.

* De Consideratione, Lib. ii. cap. 11.

† Epist. clviii.

‡ Bell's *Observations on Italy*.

§ Hom. 25, in Gen.

charity of the gospel. The ecclesiastical courts rejected all extorted confessions, but in the secular still prevailed the opinion of the old civilized world—*ut facinoris veritas quæ indice vocis non promitur, dolore corporis exprimatur*.^{*} We can only account for this by the disposition of the Christians to suffer rather than to act, to take as little part as possible in public affairs, and by remarking that the complete extinction of Pagan traditions in the administration of the civil power was necessarily a work of time. As effects are not often produced until the cause which led to them has been removed, so the total abolition of this execrable custom was at length obtained, though not until the faith which had been for eighteen centuries in constant action to undermine it had in many places ceased to operate. Be this as it may, the religious reformers have won no glory here. The torture was not abolished in Sweden till a short time before Howard's visit. In Hanover it was still used in 1781, and at Hambourg he gives a fearful description of what he saw. Nowhere does he seem to have found so horrible a scene of torment provided for captives as in the prison at Nuremberg, which was the first city that embraced the reform, and where he penetrated into the dismal chamber of torture on which he read the horrible line—

"Ad mala patrata, hæc sunt atra theatra parata."

I forbear to cite domestic testimony, but the Catholic traditions of England are still fresh, and therefore such evidence may be passed over. At the same time, we must remember that the legitimacy of torture was not an universal belief in the middle ages. It is not the fact, that every man in judicial authority approved of it. The difficulty was, to inspire mercy in the civil power, which, without the influence of the Church, would have often lapsed into a cruelty even surpassing that of the ancient governments; for men who resisted the mercy of Christ were of the blackest dye of all; and it sometimes happened that the ferocity of men was too strong for the ecclesiastical spirit to repress it, as when the French court would not permit the constable of St. Pol to receive the communion before his execution,[†]—fearful instance of what Richard Plantagenet says, in the words of Shakspeare,—

*"—— heart be wrathful still,—
Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill."*

With respect, however, to severity of legislation in general, there may, perhaps, be some truth in the observation, that in proportion as a people becomes sensual and merciless, its laws will become mild; for it will have the desire and the energy to throw off whatever presses hard upon the passions, in the same manner as with corruption of manners language often affects greater chastity; and in a licentious and unprincipled community, every one fears for himself—a fact which did not escape the notice of ancient writers, one of whom says, "*Cum sint mali, tanquam suæ sibi conscii malitiæ sibi timent, et malos prædicant, non puniri. Hoc autem pietatis intuitu non prædicant, sed timore.*"^{*} Besides, we might expect to find severity of punishment in proportion to the sense entertained of the magnitude of danger or crime; and it was certainly a maxim of our ancient legislators, *qui parcit uni malo nocet omnibus bonis*. That it was just and useful to terrify the imagination of the people by the appalling forms of execution, no one will question who reflects how much their abolition has tended to embolden desperate men, who have so often been found to encourage each other by the remark that the worst they could suffer would be from a blow of the guillotine—a death not even ignominious in their eyes, and which some great criminals have declared preferable to the protracted sufferings of an old man, confirming their opinion by the verses of a poet:—

*"While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang, one bound, escapes control."*

But it is enough to glance at such an odious subject. There is evidently a dilemma. The assent of the ancient Christian legislators to what they had found existing, presents, no doubt, a difficulty; but however severe or execrable their customs may have been, our duty, in the present instance, as observers of manners, imposes on us the strict obligation of never viewing them apart from a series of most remarkable facts, attesting the heroic exercise of individual mercy, either in attempts to infuse greater mildness into the civil authority, or in saving culprits from the

^{*} S. Cyprian, *Tractat. cont. Demetr.*

[†] Pasquier, *Recherches de la France*, vi. 10.

^{*} Eyraudus *cont. Waldens.* c. 15.

hands of the temporal magistrate. Witness that noble judge, of the Brignoli family at Genoa, whose portrait is seen, among those of other benefactors, in the Albergo dei Poveri in that city, who renounced the high office with which the state had entrusted him, and became a priest, rather than continue to administer law under a legislature which required torture. The traitors who conspired against the Emperor Lewis, were condemned to death, but he would not consent to have the sentence executed. Bernhard, however, the chief who sought to dethrone him, had his eyes put out, and died three days afterwards; and when the emperor heard of the event, he wept with great lamentation during a long time, and made his confession before all the bishops, and received penance from them, because he had not prohibited his counsellors from performing this cruelty; and on this account, he gave great alms to the poor for the purgation of his soul.* Witness, again, the act of King Edward the Confessor, which was delineated and wrought in the hangings about the choir of Westminster abbey, and which is thus briefly related by an ancient writer:—"The king detected, three times, a poor courtier pilfering money from his casket, and when his chamberlain was greatly moved on discovering the theft, the king willed him not to be grieved. 'For,' said he, 'he that hath it, hath more need of it than we have.'" Similarly, King Charles the Fifth of France would not suffer the law to be enforced against his barber, when detected in attempting three times to steal gold from his person. Hear how a contemporary relates the merciful acts of King Robert. "Being about to celebrate the holy Pasch at his palace of Compiègne, twelve nobles were arrested, on a charge of having conspired to assassinate him. After interrogating them, he ordered that they should be confined in the house of Charles the Bald, fed with royal viands, and on the holy day of the resurrection, fortified with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the second feria, they were tried and condemned, but the pious and prudent king absolved them, on account of the benign Jesus, saying, that men, nourished with celestial food and drink, ought not to be condemned. Lest, however, they should return to act iniquity, he addressed them in holy words, and then dismissed them,

to return to their own homes."* Ogger, a poor clerk, coming from the kingdom of Lothaire, was received by Robert, and associated into his college of clerks; but he was a traitor, like another Judas. One evening after supper, when the darkness or night covered the earth, the king, as usual, went to his chapel, to say his last prayers; his clerks preceding him, carrying massive candlesticks, which, being placed, he retired into a corner, and meditated. At this moment, Ogger approached the altar, and thinking himself unobserved, seized one of the candlesticks, and concealing it under his dress, departed. When the clerks returned, and discovered the theft, they asked the pious king concerning it, but he would give no information. Constantia, the queen, of whom it used to be said,

"*Constans et fortis, quæ non Constantia ludit,*"

was inflamed with anger, and she declared, that the eyes of the sacristans should be put out, unless the thief was discovered. The king, hearing this, took the wretch aside, and said, "Friend Ogger, depart hence, lest my inconstant Constantia should destroy you. To provide for your return to the land of your nativity, you have already taken enough. May the Lord be with you, wherever you go. Depart quickly."† These are not isolated examples: they paint whole ages. St. Benedict, of Aniana, would not even punish the robbers, who committed depredations on the estates of his monastery. When the peasants one day brought him a man, whom they had caught riding away with several horses belonging to the fraternity, and whom they had ill-used, he caused the thief to be healed, and dismissed. On another occasion, while walking with a monk in the neighbouring fields, he met a man mounted on one of his horses; and when the monk called his attention to the circumstance, he contented himself with observing, that many horses were alike; though he afterwards admitted, that he knew both the animal and the thief. Of St. Gregory, of Utrecht, we have a similar anecdote, related by his friend and disciple, St. Liudger. Two of his brothers had been murdered in a forest. The murderers were seized, and, in conformity with Germanic custom were brought to him, that he might

* Thegani de Gestis Ludovic. Pii, 23.

• Helgaldi Epit. Vit. Rob. ap. Duchesne Hist. Franc. Script. iv. † Id.

decide on their fate. He caused them to be bathed, clothed, fed, and quietly dismissed with this gentle admonition:—"Go in peace, but refrain hereafter from crime, lest a worse thing happen to you." These examples are, indeed, of ancient date; but let it be remembered, that St. Antoninus, the great Archbishop of Florence, amidst all the refinement and complicated interests of one of the richest cities of Europe in the sixteenth century, acted in the same manner. A certain scandalous priest, named Ciardi, who had been cited before his tribunal, came to his house before the hour of audience, entered his chamber, where he found him alone, and, without saying a word, struck at him with a dagger, and with such force, that, on the archbishop leaning aside to escape the blow, the poignard remained sticking in the back of the chair. The holy prelate, retaining his wonted composure, only knelt down to thank God, and the assassin fled. From that day, the saint never ceased to pray for his conversion, and on no account would he suffer him to be pursued. After some time, his devout prayers were heard. Ciardi entered into himself, and, in order that his penance should be as long as his life, took the habit of St. Francis, in the little convent of St. Michael, where his perseverance edified the faithful, and consoled the holy archbishop.* Such was the unwillingness of men who loved justice, in these ages of mercy, to punish persons who were guilty of the greatest crimes. Commiseration and solicitude for such wretches, in a Catholic country, is even at the present day sanctioned by the magistrates, who permit and encourage merciful individuals to come forward in their favour; which conduct of rulers and people has most certainly come down from the ages of faith; for so little has modern philanthropy contributed, that all moral writers of the present day denounce it in the severest terms, as a morbid sensibility, debasing and injurious.

Following the steps of the blessed merciful, we must now enter the prisons; and, therefore, prepare thy soul, companion, to encounter objects full of gloom; for I will nothing extenuate, but show thee at once the dismal reality, the first glance at which will remove all fear that we shall not find the dungeons terrible enough. Neverthe-

less, ere we pass the first threshold, let me admonish thee to stand upon thy guard against the inference that modern sophists are sure to draw from a retrospect of this kind. It is well to be armed against them from the first; and, therefore, mark well this fact, which, in few words, can put them down;—that however deplorable may have been the condition of prisoners in the middle ages, the revolution of the sixteenth century, and the religion which succeeded, brought them no relief, as the black assizes at Oxford, in 1577, could bear witness. The Chancellor Bacon and Dr. Mead ascribe the death of the chief justice, the sheriff, and three hundred persons on that occasion, to an infection brought into court by the prisoners. Testimony of the same kind, to the influence of the new opinions upon the state of prisons, was afforded at Taunton in 1730; and again, twenty-five years later, at Axminster, when the whole town was infected by the release of one prisoner; and again at London, in 1750, when three judges, the lord mayor, and a number of others, died of the jail fever, of which Howard found little or no trace in any Catholic country. The great prison at Naples contained, in 1781, nine hundred and eighty prisoners; yet he found no indication of fever, but an air within it as wholesome as in the prisons of Austrian Flanders, France, Spain, or Tuscany, "where you rarely experience," he says, "that infectious odour which fills the English prisons, as also those of Sweden, Denmark, and Russia. In Spain," he says, "most prisons have spacious courts, fountains, running streams, arcades, and fresh air." The fact is, that every cruelty, every abuse, in regard to prisoners, was left untouched by the reformers, while in countries that remained Catholic, a gradual amelioration had taken place; so that at the close of the eighteenth century, when Howard wrote, the condition of prisoners was incomparably more wretched, amidst the nations of the north, than where Catholicism still reigned. The first pages of his work on the state of prisons disclose a fearful picture of the inhumanity which was exercised towards persons in confinement in England. Their allowance of food being determined by the relative value of money in remote times, had become insufficient for the support of life; and when the guardians of the bridewells used to ask for additional food, the reply of the magistrates was, "Let them work or die;" though in many places, they were

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* iii. liv. xx.

not permitted to work, or receive profit from their work. The prisons opened only once in the year; and at Hull, the assizes were held only once in seven years. The reform had not done more for prisoners in other nations. Such was the infected air in the blue tower of Copenhagen, that when the Count Struensee was drawn from it to be led to a terrible death, he exclaimed, "O what a pleasure to breathe the fresh air!" Howard found that the prisons of Sweden were not better administered than those of Denmark; the air was infected in them all. In a prison at Stockholm, remarking the half-famished looks of some prisoners, whose allowance of bread and water was barely sufficient to support life, the jailor scornfully replied, "It is good for the health." Yet, at this epoch, the state of prisoners, in Catholic countries, was in general far different. While in England, Scotland, and Russia, no attention was paid to their morals, he found in the prisons of Austrian Flanders, France, Spain, and Italy, wise rules to prevent any immorality, or profanation, or disorders; so that, like the prisons in Egypt, when their management was confided by the Prefect to Josephus, "the place," as Philo says, "did not resemble a prison, but *σophρονιστήριον*, a school of virtuous discipline. At Antwerp, a fine of two sous was imposed on every one who swore, or uttered an imprecation. The administration of the prisons at Genoa, at Manheim, at Strasbourg, and at Paris, filled him with admiration. He says, that the Agastro and the Caza di Correzione, at Milan, do honour to the country. While prisoners in England were frequently half starved to death before their trials, he found in the prisons at Florence, Naples, Paris, Madrid, and Brussels, that the food was abundant, and wholesome. At Antwerp only, the allowance was small; but he adds, that the monasteries took care to supply what was wanting through the parsimony of the government. Similarly, the prisoners in the tower of the old castle at Bonneville, in Savoy, used to be supplied with soup on two or three days every week by a convent. While in England, prisoners were loaded with irons, at the discretion of the jailors, he found them exposed to no such cruelty and despotism in Catholic countries. Instead of the merciless despots who had charge of the English jails, whom he describes as being more cruel even than the magistrates, retaining sometimes in confinement, as at Durham, in 1755, prisoners after their acquittal, but who could not pay the price which they asked for the certificate

of the judge's sentence, he found this class of men, in Catholic countries, humane, and even affectionate. "Prisoners in France," he says, "have no reason to complain of jailors." While in Scotland prisoners for debt were prohibited by law from enjoying even the fresh air, though with the jailor at their side, he found that this class of miserable men, then very small in Catholic countries, was always treated with a kind of generous liberality. By the ancient Catholic laws, the creditor was even bound to supply proper nourishment to the imprisoned debtor; and if a poor debtor should be sick in prison, he was to be carried to the house of the creditor, and have medical advice and assistance at his expense; and if the creditor refused to receive him into his house, during his sickness, the debtor was to regain his liberty.* In the prison for debtors at Milan, in 1781, there were only eleven persons confined; "though," adds Howard, "this city is vast and commercial." At Strasbourg, in 1778, there were but three. At Mayence, the prison for debtors was empty; so were those at Coblenz, and at Manheim. At Cologne, in 1778, he found no prisoners of any description in the tower. In the same year, the great prison of Aix la Chapelle was empty, and in the Bad tower of Fribourg he found no prisoner.

Having this point well established, we may now recur to ancient times, with less danger of being led into error, while visiting, in imagination, the fortress or the feudal dungeon, to inquire whether there can be found within them any trace or memory of the blessed merciful.

"Our forefathers," says Cicero, "meant the prison to be a security for the punishment of notorious and nefarious criminals;"† but such was not exactly the idea in the society of the middle ages, where public prisons were required; for we observed in the last book, that many cities could then boast of having no prison. Merciful correction, and not vengeance, was the object then contemplated, as the very walls were made to proclaim. On the prison at Syracuse, built by John Capoblanco, bishop of that see, might be read this inscription:—"Hic mentis sanies afflictione corporis curatur. Joannis Syracusani Episcopi pietas commiserans malos à fundamentis erexit."‡ In a prison at Rome, Howard remarked the following inscription:—"Parum est coercere improbos pœna, nisi probos efficias disciplina." The words justice and clemency are inscribed

* Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miserab. Person. 139.

† Catil. II.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, tom. i. c. 48.

over the gate of the great prison built by Innocent X. On the portal of the prison at Vienna was a striking picture of the crucifixion, in which the two thieves were represented. Over the first of the five gates which you have to pass before arriving at the court of the Prison Dellestinche at Florence, were inscribed two words, "oportet misereri," which may have served to another purpose, besides awakening a sterile pity, though Howard deemed them useless. Amidst the mouldering desolate chambers that may still be traced in so many old castles, as in that of Baden, the tales that memory is sure to recall, and the dark scenes that fancy so readily suggests, will seem, indeed, to contradict this testimony, and to confirm a very different opinion respecting the nature of prisons in the middle ages. Horrible exceptions, undoubtedly, there were; but it should not be forgotten, that even under the worst circumstances wherever the Catholic religion was known, the traditions of mercy were known, at least, by some that could not be far off; and, therefore, there was a great probability that the force of measures, or the cruelty of some, could not wholly prevent the action of individual grace, and the tenderness of others. There was besides, something always at the bottom, even of the sternest heart, to which the unhappy could appeal. The feudal tower, like the fortress of Spielberg, might confine the wretched captive; but the chances were nearly infinite against his finding a keeper wholly insensible to pity, like a personification of a political system, or the blind instrument of a blood-thirsty heart. The authentic documents of the trial of the Maréchal de Biron mention, that the name of the jailor of the Bastille at that time was Rumigny; and the historians of that prison inform us, that he had a wife who prostrated herself in prayer when the Maréchal was conducted to the scaffold. A French writer remarks, that the prison of Bonneville, in Savoy, was left in a deplorable state. He found seventeen prisoners in one of the two towers of the old castle on the mountain. "The jailor," he adds, "is a rough fellow, yet full of sensibility, and he collects alms for them with great compassion." Silvio Pellico, whose book is a book of all ages, relates, that one day, being re-conducted to his dungeon, he found the door of Orobani's cell open. They had hitherto only heard one another from their respective casements. The guards were hastening to shut it, but Pellico was too quick for them; and, in an instant, the two prisoners were in

each other's arms. Schiller, the old jailor, was confounded at the sight, exclaimed horribly, and raised his hand with a threatening air; but his eyes filled with tears, and he exclaimed, sobbing, "O my God, have mercy on these poor young people, and on me, and on all the unhappy; Thou who wast also upon earth unhappy!" You have a similar instance in the ancient chronicles of Italy. The monster Eccelino de Romano used to leave his prisoners to die of hunger. There were shrieks of woe, and a sound of hands smote together, and spectres of wretched captives expiring through famine; so that to visit one of his prisons, was like entering hell. How could one hope to find that Catholic mercy was able to penetrate here? Yet it did penetrate, as the history of Arnaldus, that mirror of monks, Abbot of St. Justina, at Padua, will demonstrate. This holy man died on Ash-Wednesday, in his prison at Asilum, in the seventieth year of his age, after remaining eight years and three months in a dark dungeon, a true martyr, who patiently and innocently endured that long passion of captivity. In the last years, the tyrant commanded that he should be left alone, and fed on black bread and water; but the guards loved him, and secretly supplied him with better food, and with various refreshments. At his funeral, the fear of the tyrant could not prevent a vast multitude from attending, and following the body to the convent of the minors, where he was to be buried, extolling him as a martyr, and pronouncing his death to have been blessed.* During the wars between the houses of Montfort and Blois, for the duchy of Brittany, John count of Montfort, and duke of Brittany, invited Oliver de Clisson, a Briton, and constable of France, whom he knew to favour his cousins, to inspect the castle called L'Ermine, which he had lately built in the outskirts of Vannes. On reaching the principal tower, the duke stopped below, and desired the constable to mount; and no sooner had the latter reached the first story, but he was made prisoner by some men of arms, who had been placed there for the purpose, loaded with irons, and left in solitude; and orders were given to the Seigneur de Balavan to drown him secretly at midnight. This gentlemen made great remonstrance, but nothing could prevail upon the duke. Balavan, however, like a good and loyal knight, knew his master's interest better than he did himself, and resolved to wait for time to cool his passion,

* Monach. Paduani Chronic. Lib. ii. c. 2.

but to pretend that he had fulfilled his orders. After the duke's first sleep, reason began to combat his fury, and to represent the treachery of this act in its true colours. At break of day, he sent for Balavan, and asked if the sentence had been executed, who replied that it had. At this, the duke gave way to the most bitter lamentations, and ordered himself to be left alone, passing the day in tears and groans, refusing food. Towards evening, Balavan, not being able to endure that the duke should pass the night in such a state, came into his presence, and told him that he came to console him, and to bring him a remedy for everything. "Yes, for all but death," replied the duke. The other, however, informed him, with a smile, that he had disobeyed his orders, and that the constable was alive and well. Then the duke wept for joy, and promised to reward Balavan for having rendered him such a service.* So, again, the monk of Monte Cassino, in the history of the Normans, relating the delivery of Tridinocte, Hugo of Fallaise and many others, from their prison in the great tower of Guaymere, Prince of Salerno, in the year 1046, says that Martin, the guardian of the prison, readily agreed to let them escape, and that for two reasons; — l'une pource qu'il avoit compassion de lor misère, and the other, in hope of a recompense.† But it was to the heart of woman especially, that prisoners, in ages of faith, were indebted; for she was imaged there, by whom the key did open to God's love; and in sweet acts of grace and tenderness did they develop what they felt within them of resemblance to that Virgin Mother, whom St. John Damascene beautifully styles the friend of Mercy. What pilgrim to the holy city has not heard of that Queen, whose death did so ennoble the island in Bolsena's lake, where the king of the Ostrogoths commanded her to be slain? Cassiodorus says, that such was the incredible sweetness and gravity of her speech, that when criminals were condemned to death, they were soothed by hearing her speak to such a degree, that they made light of the judgment passed upon them. How many of these Amalasuntas were sent upon earth in the middle ages as ministering angels, to console the miserable! St. Anastasia, a noble Roman matron, used to give all she had to the Christians in prison; and when they were executed, she wept, exclaiming, that they had taken from her the objects of her mercy; and so con-

fessing Christ, became herself a martyr. St. Radegund, wife of King Clothaire, walking one evening after supper in the garden at Perona, the prisoners cried out to her from the grate of the prison, vociferating. She asked what cries they were, and the servants falsely said, that they arose from a crowd of beggars; and she believing them, sent out alms. Meanwhile, the prisoners were enjoined to keep silence; but when night came on, she began to make her accustomed round, and then, it is said, that these poor captives came to her, expressing their gratitude, having been miraculously freed from their chains.* During the short interval in which Latude, one of the victims of Pompadour, had enjoyed liberty after his deliverance from Vincennes, and before his second arrest, and imprisonment in a subterranean dungeon at Bicêtre, he had written a short account of his misfortunes, intending to send it to a President of Tournelle; but the paper being lost by the messenger, Providence ordained that it should fall into the hands of a mercer's wife, named Legros, in the street of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. This woman had never seen Latude, nor was she aware that such a person existed; but he is unfortunate, and she will use every effort to save him. Her charitable husband enters into her views, she hastens to the court, employs all her interest with the subalterns; the birth of the dauphin gives occasion for an amnesty, but a surety is required; the mercer's wife subscribes it, and Latude is free, after a captivity of thirty-nine years.

The mercy of the clergy towards all persons in captivity, is continually traced. Thus by the canons of the council of Clermont, in 549, it is ordered, that the prisoners should be visited every Sunday by the Archdeacon, or some other minister of the Church, who must provide for their wants. St. Cæsarius, having sold even the ornaments and sacred vessels of the Church, in order to relieve the wants of the prisoners taken from the enemy, was accused of disloyalty to King Theodoric, who ordered him to be conducted to Ravenna; but he was so struck with his venerable air, that he immediately pronounced him innocent, and dismissed him, with a present of a silver basin, weighing sixty pounds, and 300 sols in gold. Cæsarius sold the basin, and with the money, according to his custom, redeemed several from captivity. The clergy, both regular and secular, of all cruelty the foes, were unremitting in alleviating the

* Pasquier, Recherches de la France, vi. 30.

† L'Ystoire de li Normant, Liv. ii. c. 33.

* Vincent Bellov. Speculum Historiale, Lib. xxi. c. 80.

horrors of the feudal prison. "O, the great virtue of St. Fale," exclaims an ancient writer. "A certain cruel man, in the reign of Childebert the Sixth, reproachful and insolent, proud and vicious, kept in prison a young man, who, indeed, deserved some punishment for his faults, but he punished him with much greater severity than justice required. The father, named Æmilian, ran, with tears in his eyes to the saint, and begged his assistance. The man of God consoled him to the best of his power, and gave him the stick which he usually carried, desiring him to present it to the cruel lord, and to desire him, on his part, to set his poor young captive at liberty, and to pardon him. Such was the power of sanctity in those ages, that this tyrant, although he outraged, in consequence, his holy admonitor, was not the less obliged to deliver the victim, whose rescue was ascribed to the prayers and intercession of the saint."* When Totila, king of the Lombards, moved by the fame of St. Benedict's sanctity, came to Monte Cassino to visit him, we only read of the interview, that the saint exhorted him to mercy. There is an anecdote related by St. Jonas, which is still more striking. While St. Columban was at Besançon, he was told, that the public prison was filled with condemned criminals. To them he hastened, to preach the word of God; but he also did them other service. Having made them promise that they would amend their lives, and sustain the canonical penance for their respective offences, he ordered their irons to be unloosed, and set them free. Such was the reverence in which he was held, that no one dreamed of opposing him. Having washed their feet, a common work of humility, he sent them to the cathedral, to assume the usual penance, and to mourn over their sins. The mercy of the Church is continually seen in action in behalf of prisoners. The first canon of the synod which was held at Ries in 1284, under Rostagnus II., Archbishop of Aix, commands prayers to be offered, for obtaining the liberty of Charles, Prince of Salerno, who was then in the prison of the Sicilians;† and there is extant a long and beautiful Latin poem, which was sent to Aigulfus, Archbishop of Bourges, in the ninth century, by Teudulfus, then in exile, praying, that by his prayers, and those of his brother bishops, he may be permitted to return to his country, from which he was banished, on

suspicion of having been implicated in the conspiracy of Bernard, king of Italy, against his father, the emperor Lewis.* "The Roman Church," says St. Bernard, writing to the Milanese, "hath treated you as a mother. What ought she to do for you, and hath not done? If you asked that your fellow-citizens might be delivered from the chains of the Placentians, this has been done."† But still more remarkable is his letter to the Genoese, in which he says, "When I visited your city last year, each morning, noon, and night, I announced to you the word of God; and there was as much charity amongst the hearers, as there was avidity of hearing. I went forth to sow the seed of peace, and the celerity with which I reaped fruit was truly wonderful; in one and the same day sowing and bringing back the sheafs with exultation; for this is the harvest which I reaped,—the return of exiles to their country; the deliverance of captives from chains and prisons, the glory of the Church, the joy of the world."‡ The Theodosian code ordains as follows:—"Let the judges personally inspect the prisoners who are to be brought before them every Sunday, and ask them whether, in consequence of corrupt jailors, humanity hath been denied to them; nor let there be wanting the laudable care of the priests of the Christian religion to admonish the judges to the practice of this observance.§ Concerning those who are imprisoned, we order the bishops of the place to visit them in their captivity on one day in every week; that is, on the fourth or sixth feria, and diligently to inquire the cause for which they are detained, and whether they are slaves or free men, whether they are confined for debts or for other charges, or for homicides, and to admonish the illustrious magistrates, as well those who are in this happy city, as those who are in the provinces, that those things may take their course which had been ordained by our constitution to the illustrious prefects, license being given to the bishops, if they should know of any negligence on the part of the illustrious magistrates, or of those who serve them officially, to declare it."||

This "laudable care of the priests," can be traced through all these ages. In the twelfth century we find the great Dominican, Robert Kilwarbi, archbishop of Canterbury, in the first year of his government visiting

* Desguerrois, *Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes*, 117.
† *Gallia Christiana*, tom. i. 16.

* *Gallia Christiana*, tom. i. 51.

† *Epist.* cxxxi. ‡ *Epist.* cxxix.

§ *Cod. Theodoc.* lix. tit. iii. l. 7.

|| *Cod. Justin.* i. tit. iv. l. 22.

the prisoners, consoling and instructing the criminals, relieving the debtors, giving great alms to all, and restoring many to liberty. There is extant one of his letters, dated the 18th of May, 1273, in which he orders certain men in authority, to release from prison and to set wholly free many persons who were unjustly detained there, and he threatens them with canonical penalties if they neglect to comply.*

We find that one of the first acts of the great and merciful pontiff, Benedict XIII., was to visit the prisons, and order that all prisoners, whatever might be their crime, were to be treated with humanity from the first to the last day of their confinement, and that the greatest attention should be paid to maintain cleanliness and salubrity. The Church, on all her great anniversaries, endeavoured that prisoners should partake of that common joy from which she says, "Let no one be excluded." At Rheims the two archdeacons, who were at all times to take care of the prisoners, were especially enjoined to visit them on the principal festivals.†

It was ordained by the consuls of Bologna, in the twelfth century, that during eight days before and as many after the festival of St. Petronio, debtors who chose to assist at the solemn office of the finding of his relics should be free from all molestation of creditors, and that their goods also should be protected during the interval.‡

This was providing for a want that in the middle ages would have added greatly to the bitterness of a prison. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais' work relates, that the son of a certain Norman noble who had been taken prisoner by the Sarassins, being in a deep dungeon, called to memory the great festival which his father used to celebrate in his chapel on the day of St. Nicholas, and began to weep at the recollection; and that when the Sarassins heard the cause, they scourged him cruelly. It is added, however, that he was miraculously delivered, and that after sleep he found himself in his father's chapel.§

In the year 1287, the Prince of Salerno, who was afterwards Charles II., King of Naples and Count of Provence, sent Raymond de Nevellion, Bishop of Gap, from Barcelona to Pope Martin IV. at Rome, to beg that his holiness would permit him

to have mass and the divine office celebrated in his prison, notwithstanding the interdict under which Catalonia then lay—which petition was granted.* The extent to which mercy was exercised on the great festivals, by the state, would seem incredible if it were not so well attested. St. Eloy, in his Homily on Maunday Thursday, speaking of the mysteries of that day, adds, "Malefactors are pardoned, and the gates of prisons are opened, throughout the whole world." Though this general amnesty was subsequently restricted, it still continued to be a custom with the feudal princes to deliver two prisoners or to enfranchise two serfs on Christmas eve.† At Rome we find this practice continually prevailed. Thus Benedict XIII., at the Christmas solemnities, visited the prisons and ordered some prisoners to be set free, in honour of the mystery which has delivered all men from the captivity of the demon.‡ In Navarre, the viceroy and magistrates used to repair twice every year to the prisons, at Christmas, and eight days before Easter, and release as many prisoners as they pleased. Howard says, that in 1783 they released thirteen at Easter, and some years before they released all. Even where prison gates remained closed, it seems on these occasions to have been the desire of the civil authorities that the condition of captives should be somewhat alleviated. Roger de Breteuil, Count of Herfort, being convicted of treason against William the Conqueror, was condemned, according to the Norman laws, to pass the rest of his days in prison. Orderic Vitalis says, that "when the people of God were preparing to celebrate the festival of Easter, the king sent to the count in his prison a present of precious clothes, a mantle and a tunic of silk, and a robe of precious skins and furs, which Roger threw into the fire to show his scorn of the king."§ Such a present was only in accordance with the general practice of that time. When Duke Robert closely besieged the strong rock of Saint Severin, where Balalard had taken refuge, "it happened," saith the monk of Monte Cassino, "that the clothes of Balalard, through age, began to fall to pieces; and he besought Roger, the Duke's son, that on Easter-day he would supply him with what was necessary, for one should be clad

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 4.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. i. 83.

‡ Sigonii, De Episcop. Bonon. liv. i.

§ Speculum Morale, liv. iii. Pass. x. dia. 24.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 6.

† Marchangy, Tristan le Voyageur, tom. iii. 132.

‡ Touron, tom. vi.

§ Hist. Norm. Lib. iv.

in new cloth on a great festival; and the young man went to his father, and told him that Balalard asked for a robe; and the duke commanded that there should be brought to him good cloth and proper, of different kinds, and he gave them to his dear son, and commanded him to present them to Balalard: and so it was done."*

Of the desire of comforting prisoners on the festivals, we can trace some faint vestiges in the use of certain poor formalities down to the worst times of the modern political despotisms. By the terms of the regulations for the interior economy of the Bastille in 1764, we find mention of three days every year on which an extraordinary allowance was made to the prisoners. On the festival of the Epiphany, as also on the feasts of St. Lewis and of St. Martin, there was to be half of a roasted fowl provided for each;—a great addition, no doubt, to their ordinary fare,

"———such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Life brutes within an iron den."

At Madrid, prisoners were treated with better fare on the three festivals of Christmas, Easter, and San Fernando. Howard remarked that at Leghorn, on the two great days of Easter, the prisoners were supplied with meat and rice, that the prison slaves at Civita Vecchia were supplied with beef and wine at Easter, Christmas, and during the carnival, and that in Austrian Flanders prison fare is better on all holy days. We have frequently had occasion to notice the acts of sovereign grace with which the celebration of the Christian festivals was accompanied. Speaking of the notorious adventurer, Gilles Baignart, Sieur de Juez in Normandy, the ancient writers say that he could never have obtained his pardon from the king, "not even on a Good Friday;" for on that day, when the Church prays that prison gates may open, the kings of France always delivered one prisoner convicted of unpardonable crimes, in memory of the pardon which Jesus Christ obtained for the human race. Power of this kind was not an exclusive ornament of the crown in ages of mercy. On the chief religious festivals, the laws or immemorial custom in many places conferred singular privileges on the clergy, and gave them the power of delivering a certain number of prisoners. Thus at Paris, on

Palm Sunday, the clergy of Nôtre Dame used to deliver one captive from the prison of the Petit Chatelet, before which they made a station, who used then to follow them into the choir of the metropolitan Church.* At Rouen, to commemorate, as was supposed in later ages, a miracle wrought by St. Romain, his successor St. Ouen was said to have obtained a privilege of this kind from King Dagobert, which continued to be observed till the Revolution; in consequence of which, every year, on the festival of the Ascension, the canons of the Church of Rouen had the power of liberating a prisoner whom they chose amongst all those of the town whose confessions they had heard during the fifteen days preceding. The prisoner was delivered amidst the joyful sound of bells and organs and chaunt; while the clergy and all the confraternities, with lighted tapers, went in solemn procession, in honour of God, to the shrine of St. Romain. There the prisoner received absolution, while the people cried "Noel;" and then, having his head crowned with flowers, and his chains suspended from the reliquary, he supported the front of the bier which carried it, the rest being borne by others, who, during the last seven years, had been similarly delivered. In this manner they returned to the choir, where high mass was sung; during which, the prisoner went to each of the canons and asked forgiveness on his knees, who severally exhorted him to amend his life. After mass, he was conducted to the master of the fraternity of St. Romain, and magnificently entertained, served, and lodged. The next day, he heard a sermon in the chapter-house, and was admonished to return thanks to God; after which, he was dismissed, having promised to return every year during the space of seven years, to bear a taper at the procession. Taillepié describes this ceremony as observed in the reign of Henry III.;† but it is given in greater detail by Floquet; and I believe that no one can read his account, at least for the first time, without tears. What must have been the emotions of innumerable breasts, when the great bells of the cathedral and those of all the churches of Rouen announced, with a voice of thunder which could be heard for seven leagues round, that a prisoner was delivered in honour of the saint of God! "At the

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 4.

† F. Taillepié, Recueil des Antiquitez et Singularitez de Rouen, pp. 97—104.

* L'Ystoire de li Nermant, liv. vii. c. 19.

sound," says an ancient poem, "not alone the city, but every village within that compass, was filled with joy. The peasants drank their oldest wine, the citizens gave banquets to express their exultation at the mercy of God extended to the poor criminal. There was no one, however indigent, who had not his share of gladness at this great and exuberant manifestation of divine grace." What must have been felt by the spectators, when, at the close of the long and solemn train, the revered reliquary of St. Romain appeared borne in front by the prisoner, having the crown of white flowers on his head, who had no light burthen to sustain, though, as an old manuscript says, "There was no child of a good mother that did not lend a hand to help him." Now was a moment to proclaim again the mystery of our general deliverance; so when arrived in front of the cathedral, the archbishop and all the clergy fell upon their knees and sung aloud, "Tu rex gloriæ, Christi—tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem." Truly an impressive thing it was to consider what provision was made by these men of mercy to secure the recovery of this single soul. After the pontifical mass of the Ascension, he is conducted into the chapel of the confraternity, where mass is said especially for his intention, at which he makes an offering of his chains; and on the following day he is conducted processionally into the chapter-hall, where, in presence of all the canons and a multitude of other persons who are admitted, he kneels down and hears an allocution, in which is set forth the horror of his crime and the wondrous benignity of God in granting him space for repentance; and then, in a pathetic remonstrance, generally followed by a flood of tears, as old writers say, he is exhorted to live in future virtuously and Catholically, and to be ever grateful. Some were heard to say, after beholding the whole ceremony, that they would have preferred losing their heads to the privilege; but how merciful was the infliction, which recalled men to shame and justice by a solemnity so beautiful and so holy! Floquet proves that this privilege had only been gradually established, through reverence for the ascension of our Lord, and in honour of the patron saint of the cathedral, whose triumph over Paganism had in latter times been mistaken for the destruction of a dragon, under which form the old error had been represented.* The grant of a prisoner under sentence of death, having

been at first freely made by the dukes on the humble request of the canons, came to be considered in the end as a right; in defence of which, when occasion required, they never hesitated to oppose a passive resistance to the power, not alone of the local magistrates, but even of such a king as Louis XI., who, having intimated to them by letters, and by the chief justice of Rouen, that they should not grant the privilege, in 1472, to Stephen de Baudribosc, whom he was determined to judge according to his crime, received for answer, "that they would always endeavour to obey the king; that as for the choice of a prisoner, they would proceed to it according to God, and their consciences." After making which reply, they chose the said Baudribosc, whom the king pursued with such bitterness.

By virtue of this privilege, no prisoner could be put to death until the canons had made their choice; and sometimes, when the magistrates attempted to evade this necessity, prisoners, as in the case of Robert d'Auberbosc, were rescued at the foot of the scaffold. If at any time, the local authorities attempted to violate the privilege, the clergy proceeded in procession with the reliquary of St. Romain, which they deposited before the prison, where they remained night and day, regardless of any violence—for even their temporal possessions were sometimes seized in consequence—until the murmurs of the people induced the magistrates to respect the ancient custom.

In the year 1193, when Richard Cœur de Lion was in the dominions of the Duke of Austria, the Church of Rouen delivered no prisoner, as it was deemed indecorous to grant such grace while the royal crusader was in chains; but in the following year, lest mercy should have been a sufferer, the chapter obtained a prisoner, not alone for the present year, but also a second for the preceding. The same resolution that this work of mercy should not fail was evinced in 1563, when the canons demanded two prisoners in consideration of their having been unable to deliver one the preceding year, when Rouen was possessed by the Calvinists, who then in the general sacrilege demolished the beautiful and inestimable reliquary, and committed to the flames the bones of God's confessor, in honour of whom, during perhaps more than seven centuries, so many had been rescued from the jaws of death. The formal recognition of the privilege as a right, is supposed to have been first obtained from Philippe Augustus, whose piety was disposed to favour the merciful

* Floquet, *Hist. du Privilège de Saint Romain*.

disposition of the clergy, whom he loved so greatly, that according to an ancient document, "the Church of the malignant used to call him the king of priests."* Louis XII. confirmed the privilege, as "tending wholly to the praise of God, and to the utility of poor prisoners in peril of death, which, as the edict states, is a work of pity and mercy worthy of great recommendation, and of the very Christian king, zealous in the Catholic faith and in defence of the Churches."

The prisoners who had been delivered in this manner were in future eligible to all offices, as if they had never committed the crime; and it was even considered an injury to the Church, if any one dared to trouble or stigmatize them on account of it. Neither were they, at first, amenable for other crimes previously committed, though unavowed at the time; so that the delivered prisoner, however great a criminal, after he had raised the reliquary of St. Romain, became a new man, re-established in reputation, and irreproachable; but this extension of the privilege, signified by the crown of flowers placed upon his head at the moment of absolution, which Floquet condemns as exorbitant, seems to have been essential to its utility; for, without it, there could not have been the same probability of effecting a moral as well as physical emancipation. The abuses to which the privilege gave rise were easily separable from the institution itself, as long experience bore witness before the decline of faith consequent upon the religious wars, when it became subservient to other purposes, as the illustrious magistrates, who loved it complained. Even, however, in those latter times, it often well merited the affection of the merciful. In 1598, it obtained pardon for a whole village, when Peter Maillard bore the reliquary, securing thus forgiveness for himself and all his accomplices, being the unhappy peasants who had joined the revolt of the Gauthiers nine years before. In 1644, Rouen beheld a still more affecting spectacle. Two years preceding, the parishioners of Tronquay, a neighbouring village, had been barbarously outraged by a troop of soldiers, some of whom, with their captain, being slain by the peasants in their own defence, the privy council took cognizance of the affair: and as there was nothing for them to expect but vengeance, the poor villagers fled into the woods, leaving their children to beg

their bread. After being hunted like beasts of prey during two years, these unhappy men turned their eyes to the Church of Rouen, and resolved to have recourse to the privilege of St. Romain. Sixteen of them surrendered themselves. The noble relatives of the deceased captain left nothing undone to prevent their receiving the benefit; but in spite of all their efforts, notwithstanding the persuasions of the Duc de Longueville, and though the queen and the young king Louis XIV. wrote to the canons to threaten them, the sixteen prisoners were delivered, and consequently their accomplices—that is, the whole village—became exempt from further persecution. Indeed Bouthillier, the avocat of the parliament, who attacked the privilege, complained that amongst all the prisoners whom it had delivered from the time of Louis XII. there were but few gentlemen, the rest being persons of the lowest rank;—incidental notice of which fact occurs in documents relative to the confraternity of St. Romain, where it is said that the brethren were often obliged to give an entire new suit of clothes to the criminal, who was often in such a state of indigence that he could not appear decently in the procession.*

Nor was the Church of Rouen singular in the enjoyment of this privilege. The Bishop of Geneva had the right of delivering whom he would, even after capital condemnation.† The Bishop of Laon, on the day of his taking possession, could give an amnesty to all persons in exile.‡ The Church of Vendome delivered a prisoner every year, on the day of St. Lazarus, in execution of a vow of Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vendome, who on that day in 1448 was delivered from an English prison.§ The archbishop of Embrun enjoyed, for a long time, the right of pardon. At Rheims, also, when the archbishop made his first entry, it was a day of grace. The prisons were opened to all, excepting murderers and criminals exposed to capital punishment; and all persons who had been banished returned to the city.|| The privilege enjoyed by the bishop of Orleans, which was without any modification, extending to the deliverance of all prisoners, was traced from the fifth century, when St. Agnan's holy prayers

* Défense pour le Privilège, par Dadre, ap. Floquet.

† Arniseus, de jure Majestatis, ii. 3. ap. Floquet.

‡ Devisme, Hist. de Laon, i. ap. Id.

§ Jousse, Traité de la Justice Crim. ii. ap. Id.

|| Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. iii. 4.

* Necrologe de l'Eglise du Mans, ap. Floquet, i. 70.

were believed to have delivered Orleans from Attila, who had besieged it. When the new bishop arrived within a short distance from the city, all the prisoners were led before him, who then threw themselves on their knees, crying mercy. After this supplication, they rose and walked in the procession, two by two, with a rope round their necks. On entering the church, they heard mass in the chapel of St. Yves; and in the evening, being assembled in the court of the bishop's palace, the prelate addressed them from a window, exhorting them to make amends, by voluntary penances, for the remission of the punishment which was due to their crimes. Then they all knelt down and received his benediction; after which, dinner was provided for them, and each might depart whither he pleased. In latter times, most of these privileges were restrained or abolished. Such monarchs as Louis XV. were assured by lawyers and parliaments that the power of extending mercy should be confined to the crown, and the suppression of these privileges was termed by Bouchel, "cutting the wings of those who wished to fly aloft." A few years later, the right of pardon was taken even from the king, as being inconsistent with the new order of things. But a history of manners in ages of faith leads us not on such ground.

Let us return. Prisoners were often set free, in order to testify respect and affection on the arrival of some eminent servant of God. This was the case so lately as in 1647, when Thomas Turco, general of the Dominicans, passed into Spain to make the visitation of his order; for he no sooner arrived on the domain of Don Gaspar Alphonso Perez de Guzman, Duke of Medina Sidonia, than this grandee ordered all the magistrates and governors of places to go out eight leagues to meet him, and not only to present him with the keys of cities and castles, but also to open the prisons, and at his own expense to pay the debts of every prisoner, in order to mark his veneration for a successor of St. Dominick of Guzman.*

This mode of evincing respect for the servants of God was very common in earlier times. The holy hermit Leonard, in the sixth century, who inhabited a cell in the forest of Pauvain, at four leagues distance from Limoges, had been a noble-

man in great repute at the court of King Clovis I., and converted by St. Remi, after the battle of Tolbiac. Before retiring into the desert, he had evinced great charity towards prisoners, for whose consolation and instruction he exerted himself with indefatigable zeal; and when his sanctity became known, on his embracing a religious life, the king by an especial privilege granted him the power, on certain occasions, of setting prisoners at liberty. To the efficacy of his prayers multitudes in all parts of the world ascribed their deliverance from bonds. In the thirteenth century, we find that his festival was a day of obligation in England. One of the most celebrated instances was the escape of Martel Sire de Bacqueville, in the fourteenth century, from the dungeon of the Turks, on the day which was to have witnessed his death. It is said that the irons were still on his feet and hands when he found himself at the skirts of the forest of Bacqueville. He hastened to testify his gratitude, by building a chapel in his castle, under the invocation of the saint to whose prayers he ascribed his deliverance; in commemoration of which there was a solemn procession every year, on the first Sunday of November. The reliquary which contained his bones, in the collegiate church of Varzi, represented the prison of the Bastille at Paris.

Travellers in the sixteenth century relate, that in the beautiful church of the convent of St. Leonard, near Blondo Ferensuola, in Apulia, belonging to the Teutonic knights of Prussia, there were suspended on the walls an incredible number of irons, chains, manacles for the arms and feet, and collars, which had been placed there as votive offerings by those who ascribed their escape from the galleys or dungeons of the infidels, and also their deliverance from prison in Christian countries, to the merciful prayers of that saint.*

In general we find that the clergy took every occasion to impress upon the civil power the duty of mercy to prisoners. Their deliverance was termed, in canon law, *causa maximè pia*; so that the intervention of a festival presented no obstacle to pursuing it according to judiciary forms.†

In the seventh century, St. Leu, Archbishop of Sens, by the calumny of some

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. v. liv. 36.*

* Leandri Alberti *Descript. Italie*, 384.

† Novarii *Tractat. de Privileg. Miserab. Person.* 106.

envious persons, had incurred the anger of King Clotaire, and was sent into banishment, contrary to the form of ecclesiastical rights. His archdeacon hastened to find St. Vinebauld, and besought him to assist the Church of Sens in this misfortune. The holy man set out from Troyes immediately, and passing by Paris, arrived at Rouen about the hour of vespers. It was too late for him to enter the city that night, so he ordered his tent to be pitched, and then he received a crowd of devout poor people who were drawn by the fame of his sanctity. The next day he was admitted to the king, who received him as if he had been an angel; but the saint freely remonstrated with him on the folly and crime of banishing a holy bishop who prayed every day for the prosperity of his kingdom, and reminded him that the kings his predecessors had always respected bishops. The king yielded in every thing, and desired him to dispose of the affair as he wished. St. Vinebauld then obtained the deliverance of all the prisoners in the city, who were set free at his request, in order to honour God the more, and to draw down a blessing on the crown of France. The saint then returned to Paris, whence he conducted St. Leu back to Sens. The people of the city came out in a body to receive their archbishop and his angelic deliverer, who entered amidst the joyful peal of bells and melodious chaunts, while fires shone on all sides. After singing *Te Deum* in the cathedral, St. Vinebauld took leave of the archbishop, and set out on his return to Troyes.* There were cases, however, when the influence of the local clergy could effect but little towards obtaining mercy for a prisoner; and on these occasions it was to Rome that illustrious captives during the middle ages were naturally directed to look, in hopes of exciting an effective commiseration.

The Emperor Henry III. having taken the kingdom of Sicily from William who had succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, King Tancred, had carried him prisoner into Germany, along with his mother and sisters, where the young prince, after five years, died in captivity in the castle of Ems, in the diocese of Coire in Switzerland. "Despairing of transitory things, as report went," says Otto of St. Blaise, "he sought eternal, breathing after those joys in heaven which he could not find on earth; for, being debar-

red from active pursuits, he studied by constraint contemplating things, and, I trust, meritoriously." The mother and her three daughters, Constantia, Alexia, and Mardonias, were imprisoned in the convent of Homburg in Alsace; and two nephews of her husband were doomed to perpetual imprisonment in the gloomy fortress of Trifels, from which, as an old writer says, no one ever went out who had entered it in chains. "*Nullus exivit, qui vinctus ibidem intravit.*"* The darkest scenes of this tragedy were over before the death of Pope Celestin; but Innocent III. immediately after his election, sent the Abbot of St. Anastasius into Germany to procure the deliverance of these and other Italian captives, whom Philip Duke of Suabia still kept in prison; threatening that, unless they were released, he would subject all Germany to an ecclesiastical interdict. "You will convey," says the pontiff, "to our venerable brethren all the archbishops, and to our beloved sons the noblemen, marquesses, dukes, barons, and other princes of Germany, our mandates that our dear daughter in Christ, the noble woman Sibilia, her son and her daughters, and others of the kingdom of Sicily, who are imprisoned in Germany, may be delivered from their bonds and sent to us free, without excuse or delay; and if these our mandates be not obeyed, you will pronounce sentence of excommunication against them, and place all their dominions under an interdict, until these prisoners shall be restored to liberty."† The result of this mandate was the deliverance of the Archbishop of Salerno and his brethren, as also the release of Sibilia, the widow of King Tancred, with her daughters, who, on thus escaping from prison, fled into France, where the eldest was soon after married to Count Walter, a noble and magnanimous knight, who, by intervention of the Pope, procured the principality of Tarentum for his wife, according to the original agreement of the late emperor.‡ The Viscount of Castle Ayrard and some other Paladins, on their return from the Holy Land, were detained as prisoners at Cremona; on which occasion, Innocent wrote to the Emperor Otho, reminding him how he had been taught to detest a similar outrage when it was perpetrated against his uncle Richard, of illustrious memory, King of England;

* Rad. de Dicet. ap. Hurter.

† Inn. III. Epist. Lib. i. 26.

‡ Gesta Innocentii, III. 22.

* Desguerreis, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 143.

and bidding him tremble lest he should commit a crime which he had condemned in another, to whose seat, and not to whose wickedness, it is to be hoped, he has succeeded. At the same time, he addresses letters to the bishop of that see, and to other prelates in whose dioceses the pilgrims returning from beyond sea may be detained prisoners, charging them to procure their instant liberation and permission to proceed, with all their effects, in peace; or in the event of not succeeding, to publish a sentence of interdict and excommunication against the states and persons implicated.*

When Philip, king of France, attempted to have his recent marriage with Ingeburgh sister of Canute, king of Denmark, dissolved, that unhappy young princess, most beautiful and holy,† being present in the assembly, and not understanding the French, was told by an interpreter, a sentence of divorce was about to be pronounced; upon which, she could only utter these few words, weeping, "*Mala Francia, mala Francia—Roma, Roma.*" The king immediately banished her from the kingdom, and caused her to be placed in a certain convent, whence she was afterwards removed to confinement in one of his palaces. All who feared God, and loved justice, turned their eyes now to the apostolic seat, then occupied by Celestin, who immediately declared null and void the Gallican sentence against the helpless, unprotected woman. Innocent III. who soon succeeded, acted with memorable vigour on this occasion; and though he could not induce the king to love her, yet he never ceased labouring‡ to make him honour her. He sent her consoling letters, and caused her to be visited by his own nuncios, endeavouring to afford her some solace.§ The cry of the miserable and oppressed, throughout all these ages, was that of poor Ingeburg,—"*Roma, Roma!*" And in this respect, the holy see appears, in history, invested with such a sublime grandeur, that a mere remembrance of it, suddenly presented to the mind, is sufficient to fill the eyes with tears. Lo! that island castle in Lochlieven, which has received under its gloomy battlements, another captive queen:—lo! Fotheringay, and the place where thou hadst need to arm thy heart with strength;

—how frozen and how faint became those who loved her, ask me not, reader; for I write it not. Think thyself, if lively fancy work in thee at all, how they did feel.

O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time could ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze in vacancy.

Yet hath she one great consolation in all the horrors of her prison:—the knowledge that she is the object of the chief Shepherd's tenderest solicitude;—the knowledge that the fifth Pius meditates on her sorrows, and seeks her deliverance, with all the ardour of his soul. In fact, all that a vicar of Christ on earth could do to rescue such a victim, this holy pontiff did. He commanded public prayers, to obtain the suffrage of the faithful; he prayed for her in secret; he wrote, in her behalf, to all Christian kings and princes; he tried to send experienced persons into Scotland, with great sums of money; and, again, after her escape and defeat, when falling into Elizabeth's hands, she was consigned to another prison, he wrote letters of consolation to her, which, even at this distance of time, cannot be read without tears. In reply to her generous promise to hold fast her faith, his strain is all seraphic: he congratulates her on being permitted by the divine Saviour to suffer for sake of justice, adding, that he feels assured the holy love of God, whose sweetness surpasses all the joys of earth, will wholly take away the bitterness of her captivity.* The same pontiff exerted his efforts to procure the deliverance of Don Carlos. He wrote to Philip II., imploring him to change his resolution, representing to him the fatal consequences that would result from keeping his son in prison, the stain that he would inflict on his own reputation among all nations of the earth, the murmurs that would assail him from his subjects, who would regard him as an unnatural father, and as a king careless of the future interests of his people, by destroying the hereditary prince who was one day to govern them.† That the horror of the result was enhanced by the circumstance of Philip having been always faithful to the Church, may be inferred from the fact, that the emperor Frederick II., who made his eldest son, Prince Henry, die in prison, for having blamed his con-

* Epist. Inn. III. Liv. xii. 77.

† Rigord. 37. Vinc. Bellov. Spec. xxix. 55.

‡ Id. 55.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. IV.

† Id. iv. liv. 28.

duct with too much freedom, is always extolled, by modern historians, as the model of a great king, which proves their conviction, that such an act does not impart an equally determinative stamp on the character of a declared enemy of the holy see.

But now, methinks, I mark impatience on my reader's brow; for I have held him long in parlance, in outward courts and chambers, that still received day's cheerful beams, and he, perhaps, is one of those who love to penetrate into the recesses of old castles, and to amuse their imagination by assigning uses to most unaccountable collections of arches, vaults, and passages; and if the light should fail, and all sound but the distant moaning of a wind through some hollow stones, so much the better. Well, it is true, we cannot tell of mercy without having been led through many scenes that would be fitting in romance, and constrained to witness sad, appalling trace of the cruelty and malice of the human heart. We must penetrate into these dungeons, deep and old, whose massive columns are dim with a dull, imprisoned ray, and where, at times, perhaps, our guide will tell us, that we must take leave of all light but what a torch can give.

The monk of Monte Cassino describes the prisons of Gisolf, the ferocious prince of Salerno, who surpassed Nero in cruelty, commanding pirate vessels on sea, and troops of banditti on land, by means of which he used to cast men into dungeons, where they were half starved, and scourged and mutilated, until they paid a great sum for their ransom; and no cruelty was ever like this; and some died in prison through fear, and other tribulation; for in a narrow place he kept sometimes forty together, and his servants used to bury the dead by night, secretly; and those who died by torments, were said to have caused their own death: and during Lent, he would eat no other food but the hands, and feet, and ears of his prisoners, and being contrary to all the virtue of God, he caused the feet of twelve citizens of Amalphi to be cut off in his presence, as he sat at supper on the day when St. Peter was delivered from prison by the angel; and no marvel that he would not honour St. Peter, when he ceased not to afflict the miserable on Maunday Thursday, when Christ supped with his apostles. At one time, some Pisans, having been saved from perishing in a storm at sea, by invoking the prayers of St. Matthew, of Salerno,

being afterwards anxious to visit the holy shrine in that city, through gratitude, besought a safe conduct from Gisolf, and permission to enter Salerno for that purpose. The prince granted it, and promised favours. The Pisans entered the port, disembarked, went barefoot to the Church of St. Matthew, gave a rich pall to the altar, lighted innumerable tapers, and then returned to the port, but they could not find their ship; for Gisolf had seized it. The rich were then thrown into his prisons, while the poor were suffered to depart in quest of ransom for the others, not one of whom obtained his liberty without a great price: and Gisolf, seeing his treasure increase, was filled with worldly joy, and it seemed to him that he was no longer a mortal man, but a god. Now there was in the city of Amalphi a noble man, called Maurus, to whom Almighty God gave riches, and six sons; the eldest of whom was named Panthelo, who was every day before God, and who at Salerno, gave great alms to those who were going to the holy sepulchre of Jerusalem, received them into his house, and enabled them to accomplish the voyage they had undertaken; and he had built a hospital at Antioch, and at Jerusalem, which he supported with his riches, so that his renown spread throughout the world; and not only those who knew him, but those who knew him not, spoke of his goodness. And when Gisolf was going to the emperor of Constantinople, he and all his people were lodged and entertained by Panthelo in his house; and while Gisolf was in his house, he began to consider how he might possess himself of Panthelo's riches. So, on returning to Salerno, he pretended great friendship for Maurus, the father, and for all his sons, and promised to repay them for all their kindness. At this time, Gisolf hated and persecuted the people of Amalphi; but by commandment of the pope, he had promised Maurus, who was now a monk, that if any of his sons should fall into his hands, he would dismiss them safe and sound, without ransom. Shortly after, in a battle at sea, one of his sons John, was slain, and another son, called Maurus, was taken prisoner. At first, Gisolf treated him with honour, and made him eat with him, and invited him to play at tables with him; and then he began to think how he could get money from him. So, through great avarice, he had him seized at table, and put into a prison-room, and afterwards

into a dark place under the rock, and put divers irons upon him, and tortured him; and then demanded from Panthelo, his brother, 30,000 besants, but the brother could not pay more than 10,000, for he had no more. Finally, the empress Agnez came to his aid, a woman most Christian and devout, all whose care was in works of mercy in prisons, and in comforting the poor, and in adorning the Churches. So she came to Salerno, and threw herself at the prince's feet, and promised to pay one hundred pounds of gold, and cut off her own finger, if she could only deliver this Maurus. And at another time, there came all the college of St. Benedict to deliver him, and to pray for him. The empress was despised by the prince, and her prayer was void before the face of the tyrant, who feared not the judgment of God, nor the shame of mankind. At first, he caused his right eye to be put out; and then, day by day, he had his fingers and toes cut off, and by torments he made weak the just man; and it being the winter season, he plunged him into vinegar and ice, and after this martyrdom, Maurus was drowned in the sea, and passed to Jesus Christ.* This is the first prison; and we have paused long enough to feel its dismal horrors. The glimpse of angels amidst such execrable gloom, is one of the miraculous scenes which the history of the middle ages furnishes, in proof of our position, that supernatural mercy was ever near. Here is the second; and again a vault opens before us, that strikes, with damp and cold, both body and soul. In the year 1599, there is cast into the prison of Naples, by order of the Viceroy, another illustrious victim, for whose deliverance the sovereign pontiffs must maintain an earnest, and during a long period, ineffectual struggle. This prisoner, whose captivity commences when he is only in his thirty-first year, and who is doomed to grow old in dungeons and torments, is a Dominican friar of Calabria, named Thomas Campanella. Hear how he speaks of himself in a book, which the horrors of his prison have not prevented him from composing, against Atheists, and which sees the light in 1608, through the liberality of a friend, who publishes it in Germany.—“I have been made to change my prison already fifty times. I have been applied to the question on seven different occasions, and on the last I was made to

suffer during forty hours, and I think I must have lost ten pounds of blood. It pleased the Lord to preserve me, and to cure me after six months; but I was hardly cured, when I was thrown into a pit, whence I have been only drawn to undergo examinations. They accused me of being a demoniac and magician; of having made the book entitled the Three Impostors, which was known thirty years before I was born; of following the opinion of Democritus, though I have written against him; of being disaffected to the government of the Church, though, in my book on Christian Monarchy, I have proved, that no philosopher has ever formed the idea of a republic more perfect than that of the prince of the apostles, established at Rome. Lastly, they would make me out a heretic, though, in a known dialogue, I have expressly combatted all the heresies of our time. On these charges, I have been again thrown into the obscure pit, where I have neither air nor light.” This relation is very remarkable, as showing the hypocrisy of the civil power in pretending to punish men for offences against religion, when the real cause of displeasure was solely political; for Touron has shown, that Campanella was arrested merely in consequence of his too great readiness to declare his political opinions, at a time which was very critical for the kingdom of Naples. Gabriel Naudé remarked also, that having his head filled with all the astrological observations of the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, and Arabs, he had looked higher for the origin of all the disorders of that time, and that he was denounced to the Viceroy as if he had not simply predicted changes, but had conspired to effect them. After the first period of his confinement, he was permitted, however, to write and to see his friends; many of whom visited him from distant countries. Meanwhile, the children of mercy were not remiss. The superior of the Dominicans, many *grandses* of Spain, and the Pope Clement VIII., exerted all their efforts, with Philip III., to procure his deliverance. Pope Paul V. sent Sciopius to Naples for the same purpose; but all was in vain. At length, in 1615, Don Pedro Giron, duke of Ossona, being made Viceroy, the prisoner's condition was much ameliorated. The new Viceroy used to visit him, and consult with him as a friend; and would certainly have soon delivered him, had he not himself fallen into disgrace with the court of

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. viii. c. 4.

Madrid, and been obliged to return to Spain, where he was imprisoned in the castle of Almida, which he never left till his death. This event dispelled the hopes of Campanella; yet, being ever anxious to sanctify his sufferings, he consoled himself with reflections on the advantages arising from his captivity, declaring, that in chains and solitude, he acquired greater knowledge than he could have obtained in the society of the learned; for, being deprived of the view of this corporal world, and, as it were, buried among those who persecute him, "my mind," he says, "struck deeper root, and rose with less distraction towards Him who is called the Father of light, and the Lord of wisdom." It was reserved for Pope Urban VIII. to effect his deliverance. Innocent Maxime, bishop of Catana, and Seraphin Rinaldi, bishop of Motala, in Apulia, being both in great credit with Philip IV., were employed by his holiness; and at their earnest solicitations, the king sent orders, in 1626, to the duke of Alba, Viceroy of Naples, to set the prisoner at liberty, and declare him innocent of high treason, of which he had been accused. Nevertheless, the Pope had only been able to extricate him by pretending that, since he was accused of errors in his books, it was to Rome that he ought to be sent, to render account before the inquisition. Thither, accordingly he proceeded immediately, and on his arrival, constituted himself prisoner of the holy office; but with an understanding, that this was merely an act to colour the pretext which had been used for procuring his deliverance, and that he should have every liberty that could be desired, being prisoner only in name. After some time, Pope Urban VIII. ordered all his papers to be given up to him, assigned him a pension, and showed him so many marks of tender affection, that Gabriel Naudé took occasion to pronounce a public discourse in praise of his holiness, in which he returned him solemn thanks, in the name of the whole scientific world. These favours awakened the jealousy of the Spanish government. It is true, Campanella was only employed in writing books of science, metaphysics, and theology: he could even think of the sorrows of others, and in his tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots, and diverse elegies on the calamities of his friends, gave proof how deeply he could feel for all who had been, like himself, unhappy. But he received warning that he was not in security. The

Pope and the Romans had nearly lost all hopes of saving him, when, as he says himself, the very Christian king, the perpetual defender of the holy Church, contrived, by means of his ambassador, the Count de Noailles, to secure his escape into France, where he was mercifully received by bishops, and men of learning; Peiresc, counsellor of the parliament of Provence, entertaining him, for many months, in his house at Aix, and defraying the expense of his journey to Paris, where he ended his days in peace, in the Dominican convent in the street of St. Honoré.

Compassion for prisoners, and heroic self-devotion to obtain their deliverance, characterized men, however, of all orders in the society of the middle ages. Provenzano Salvani humbled himself so far for the sake of one of his friends, who was detained in captivity by Charles I. of Sicily, as personally to supplicate the people of Sienna to contribute the sum required by the king for his ransom. This act of self-abasement is represented by Dante as having atoned for his general ambition; for on finding him in the lesser torments which purify the proud, he inquires from Oderigi how chanced so presumptuous spirit to gain admittance there; who replies,

When at his glory's topmost height,
Respect of dignity all cast aside,
Freely he fix'd him on Sienna's plain,
A suitor to redeem his suff'ring friend
Who languish'd in the prison-house of Charles;
Nor for his sake, refused through every vein
To tremble.
This is the work that from these limits freed
him.*

Adalbert, duke of Lorraine, chancellor of Henry V., and archbishop of Mayence, was accused of disaffection to that emperor in 1112, and thrown into prison, where, as Otho of Frisingen relates, he suffered various torments, and was left without food for an almost incredible time.† He finally owed his freedom to the heroic charity of Bruno, archbishop of Cologne, who gave himself up to Henry as a pledge in his stead. That many other persons, however, evinced blessed mercy towards him in his calamity, appears from the following diploma, which he published soon after his deliverance in 1135, conferring privileges on many citizens of Mayence, in consideration of what they had suffered to

* Purg. xi.

† Chronic. Lib. vii. c. 14.

serve him,—“Let posterity learn from my fall,” said the prelate, “what danger and sudden ruin may attend prosperity. Henry V., as you know, after many benefits, merely on account of my obedience to the Roman Church, cast me into a dungeon. There I remained in darkness, bound for a long time, having for my sole consolation that saying of the chief Pastor, ‘*si quid patimini propter justitiam beati*’; and those examples which I so often called to mind of Isaiah in captivity, and Daniel in the lion’s den. Finally, by many tribulations, God from on high, visiting the contrite heart, moved the faithful citizens of Mayence to use their efforts to obtain my deliverance. At length, therefore, clerks, counts, and freemen, with citizens, and they of the family of the said emperor, having yielded up pledges in my behalf, offering their dear sons and relations, received me, weakened in all my body, and scarcely half alive, as faithful children would receive a father; but in what manner the pledges were treated, no one can tell without horror; for some returned, having had limbs cut off, others by hunger perished, and others, in exile and nakedness, contracted diseases of which they died. These things the faithful citizens of Mayence suffered for justice. Considering, therefore, how I should recompense such mercy shown on me in captivity, it seemed right that I should confer something on them to conduce to their honour and utility. Therefore, with the advice of my council, I have conferred these privileges, confirming them with my seal.”* The ransom of prisoners was a work which the blessed merciful were never slow to perform. After the sack of Rome by the imperial troops, we find the great cardinal Cajetan, who fell into their hands, borrowing money, in order to ransom not alone himself and his servants, but many poor citizens of Rome, who had been utter strangers to him before that day of adversity.† It must be remembered, also, that one duty which devolved upon nearly all the pious confraternities of the middle ages was the visitation of prisoners; so that under the worst circumstances, in the darkest, deepest dungeons of merciless despots, there was always an especial ground of probability of having some observer, to whom might be addressed the words which Dante heard

in hell:—“O gracious creature and benign! who goest visiting through this element obscure us whom the world with bloody stain imbrued.” Spenser describes the person whose especial office it was

Poore prisoners to relieve with gracious ayd,
And though they faulty were, yet well he wayd
That God to us forgiveth every houre
Much more than that, why they in bands were layd;
And he, that harrowed hell with heavie stowre,
The faulty soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre.*

That the visitation of prisoners formed a most important part of the offices of mercy, a captive in our age, from whose memoirs I have already quoted, can tell us from experience.—“One person of distinction, who came to visit us in prison,” says Silvio Pellico, “was a man of fifty or sixty years, who evinced, in his manners and in his words, the most noble compassion. He could do nothing for us; but the sweetest expression of his goodness was a benefit, and we were grateful for it. O, what a desire has the prisoner to see creatures of his species. The Christian religion, which is so rich in humanity, has not omitted to announce, as among the works of mercy, the visiting of prisoners. The sight of men who grieve for your misfortunes, even though they may not be able to relieve you more efficaciously, is a great consolation.”† Howard made the remark, that there is no country where religion dispenses so much succour to persons under confinement as Italy. “Everywhere,” he says, “there are institutions of mercy; and, in most cities, pious confraternities, whose members are exclusively occupied in consoling prisoners.” The monks and friars persuaded the laity to form associations for this purpose. Thus, in 1577, we find brother Archangelo, of Palermo, founding a confraternity to supply necessaries to prisoners.‡ The noble fraternity of St. Basil, at Messina, was originally founded for the same object.§ At Venice, Howard found a society of a similar kind; the rules of which were printed. In Catania, the mere circumstance of a fraternity having its oratory in the Church of the prison of St. Agatha, would be enough to indicate what compassion prisoners might expect to find. In fact,

* *Faery Queen*, i. 10.

† *Le mie Prigioni*, cap. 84.

‡ *Annales Capucinum*.

§ *Bonfilii Messanæ Descript. Lib. iv. in The-saur. Antiq. Ital. tom. x.*

* *Gallia Christiana*, tom. i. 355.

† *Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l’Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 25.*

such was the zeal to serve them, that it occasioned a contention between two of the confraternities of mercy in that city. The brethren of the White, who are exclusively nobles, and those of St. John the Baptist, both claimed the office of assisting criminals condemned to death. The painful duty, which was the object of so much emulation, was finally assigned to the noble brotherhood, whose oratory was in the Church of St. Catharine.* In 1519, the confraternity of the White was instituted at Naples by Calistus, of the order of regular canons of St. John Lateran, in the church of the Holy Trinity, near the royal palace; the members of which were appointed to console and exhort criminals under sentence of death. This fraternity was afterwards transferred to a chapel, of which the expressive title was *Sancta Maria Succurre Miseris*. Many noblemen were received into this pious association.† At Bologna, in the fourteenth century, the confraternity of St. Mary of Death, whose especial office was to tend the sick, took charge, also, of prisoners condemned to die; for whom they had a chapel, under the title of the Decollation of St. John, where they gave them decent burial.‡ In Florence, similarly, the brotherhood, styled *Di St. Giovanni dei Fiorentini*, not alone attends to the comfort of prisoners during life, and to their consolation at the moment of death, but after receiving their last sighs, takes charge of their burial. On digging, lately, at Lyons, on the site of an ancient religious building, a great quantity of human skulls and bones were found, which were known to be those of criminals who had suffered capital punishment, whom the brethren of the order of Mercy had charitably buried in the vaults of their own chapel. The confraternity of this kind at Rome is described by Howard as consisting of seventy persons, nearly all whom are noble. When a prisoner is conducted to death, they attend him in a body, and afterwards provide for his burial in their cemetery.

The rigour of magistrates sometimes exercised towards the dead, furnished an occasion to call forth the compassion of the blessed merciful, of which Petrus Tudertinus, a holy Capuchin friar in the convent of Foligno, gave a remarkable example when the governor of the city had

ordered the bodies of fourteen criminals to be suspended upon the gibbets, and left exposed to public view; for this friar, being moved to pity at the sad spectacle, and having obtained leave from his superior, went in the dead of night, and by means of a ladder of ropes which he brought with him, succeeded in taking down the bodies, which, with the assistance of one companion, he removed and buried in holy ground so secretly, that the author was never discovered.* Indeed, that after death, criminals continued to be objects of compassion, is a fact attested by many ancient documents; as where we read that Marguerite Mousset, wife of Jacques Aubert, maitre d'hotel of the ladies of honour of the court of France, moved with pity and charity for poor deserted souls, and particularly for those of persons executed, founded, in 1658, in the church of St. Jacques de la Boucherie, a daily mass to be said for their intention.†

In Portugal there are similar confraternities. In most prisons of that kingdom the prisoners are supported by the charity of the public. Justice there is not severe, but it is slow. Even after prisoners have been tried and condemned, they often remain some years in prison before the sentence is executed. Before the administration of the Marquis de Pombal, the jailors used to let them go out upon their word of honour. One culprit enjoyed this favour during seven years, though he had been condemned to death; and when the order came for his execution, on the mere summons of the jailor, the culprit, who was working in the provinces, without hesitating an instant, returned to his prison; and this respect for his promise moved the authorities to pardon him.

Howard observes, that at Paris there was a charitable society, founded by the Abbé Breton, to supply prisoners every week with clean linen. The poor prisoners in the tower of the old castle, on the heights of Bonneville, in Savoy, experienced a similar relief from a sisterhood of charitable ladies. A stranger who had been imprisoned in the Bastille founded a library there, from which the unhappy captives might be supplied with books. With the exception of that state fortress, every prison in Paris possessed a lady protectress, who collected alms from the rich, and distributed them among the

* De Grossis Catanens. Decachord. 11. 15. in *Thes. Antiq. Siciliae*, x.

† *Annales Capucinatorum*, an. 1542.

‡ Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. Lib. iii.

* *Annales Capucinatorum*, 1540.

† Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. i. 9.

prisoners, and at her own expense, supplied them with soup twice each week, and meat once in fifteen days. By a royal ordinance, charitable persons who desired to give alms might penetrate into every prison, and, in the presence of the jailor, the closest dungeons were opened to them. In the council chamber of the prison at Bruges, was a picture, representing a man delivering some prisoners, and a list was shown there of all the alms that had been given from the year 1316 to 1734.

"Prisoners are to be visited," says the continuator of Vincent de Beauvais' Mirror; "in compliance with the Sacred Scriptures; they are to be consoled, redeemed, and delivered. Memento victorum tanquam simul vincti. They are to be visited after the example of Christ, who descended into hell, whence he led out the conquered in strength. For this end he chose to be captive, that he might deliver the captives—to be bound, that he might loose those that were bound—to be sold, that he might redeem those that were in bondage—to be slain, and to descend into hell, that he might free his own from death and from the infernal prison. To this the example of the angels exciteth us, who visited Daniel in the lions' den, Peter in the prison, Agnes, Vincent, Catherine, and many other saints, in dungeons. To this the example of living saints inviteth us, of whom the apostle saith, "Vinctis compassi fuistis." It is delightful to trace this tradition of mercy through the obscure night of time, and amidst the dark annals which recount the reigns of a Clotaire and a Dagobert, to hear St. Ouen's exclamation, "Where was there a prisoner whom Eligius did not visit and console?" When St. Dominick was at Rome, he used every day, after the office, to go round the walls and preach salvation to the prisoners wherever they were confined.* Those who were expiating part of their crimes in dungeons, or whom the hardness of creditors retained in obscure prisons, found in this man of mercy a consoler, a friend, an intercessor, and sometimes a deliverer. There was hardly a day that he did not enter into these sombre places, to alleviate by words of consolation, or by real effects, the pains of these sad victims of the justice of men, or to teach them to sanctify their crosses by submission to the order of Providence.†

The young Ambrose, of the illustrious family of Sansedoni, at Sienna, is described

as going, on certain days every week, to visit the prisoners who were confined in that city.* Afterwards, when appointed legate of the holy see in Tuscany, we find him establishing pious confraternities, the members of which were especially bound to visit and console the afflicted spirits in prison. Cardinal Orsini, archbishop of Beneventum, used to visit the prisons of that city, in order to console their unhappy inmates; and when raised to the supreme chair, as Benedict XIII., he continued to practise the same office of mercy. Berenger de Landon, general of the Dominicans, and archbishop of Campostello, used to pass, in like manner, as an angel of mercy, through the sad seats of woe.† Bartholomew de Carranza, archbishop of Toledo, the same who received the last sighs of Charles V. in the monastery of St. Just, was also in constant habits of visiting the prisons, to console the captives. He used to give alms to some, and procure liberty for others; and there were many who owed their deliverance to his having paid their debts. Prince Maurice, of Hungary, who became an eminent member of the same order in the fourteenth century, and who had himself suffered an imprisonment of six months in a tower, by command of Ladislas, governor of Buda, was another of these gracious creatures and benign, who went visiting in mercy through the obscure dungeons. When at Bologna, he used to intercede for the poor debtors; and he often succeeded in obtaining their liberty.‡ The blessed Ventura, of Bergamo, used also to prevail upon creditors to remit part of what was due to them, and to restore unhappy prisoners to their homes and family. When, in the year 1334, he traversed Italy at the head of 10,000 pilgrims, who bore a cross for their standard, on which mercy was one of the three words inscribed, their passage was marked every where by the deliverance of prisoners. At Milan, Cremona, Bologna, Sienna, Ferrara, and Rome, the prison doors were thrown open at the voice of these men of blessed mercy.§ If we visit the celebrated Ludovicus Sforza, in the obscure dungeon in which the King of France cast him, where his hair turned grey in one night, and where he was retained during the rest of his days, we find there merchants of Florence who had penetrated into it to visit the fallen prince, through charity, doubtless;

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. v.

† Id. ii. liv. ix.

‡ Id. Lib. xii.

§ Id. ii. liv. x.

* Speculum Morale, Lib. iii. p. x. dis. 24.

† Tournon, vie de S. D. Lib. ii. c. 6.

yet in part, perhaps, to observe in trembling the rest that soothes his lot—to mark

“How that lone and blighted bosom sears,
The scathing thought of execrated years.”

To them he used to say, that these calamities had all been often predicted to him when he was at the height of his prosperous fortune, by the friar Jerome Savonarola, whom he now at length recognised to have been a just man most foully calumniated. Sforza had been one of the chief instruments to effect the ruin of that great friar, by exciting him that sat in the supreme chair; and it is delightful to remark, that it is now a friar and vicar general of his order, Vincent Bandelli, who strains every nerve to obtain the deliverance of this prince, using for that purpose all his interest with Cardinal George d'Amboise, legate in France, and that it is another Dominican, the celebrated John Clerée, confessor of Louis XII., who co-operates with him to the same end, though the efforts of both prove ineffectual.*

To visit prisoners, the blessed merciful braved and sometimes incurred death. Many citizens of Verona were seized and executed by Eccelino, in consequence of their having visited the just man, Ugo of St. Juliana, whom that tyrant had deprived of his prætorial office and cast into prison, and who, it is said, deplored their fate far more than his own.† Alexander de Lugo, an Italian Dominican, was cast into prison by the Turks, in the Isle of Chio, and told to prepare for death within three days, or else to embrace the law of Mahomet. The infidels, on conducting him to prison, after inflicting on him the bastinado, would not give him time to descend a staircase of twelve steps, but pushed him down into that obscure dungeon, where he was guarded with such severity that no friar or religious person could possibly be admitted to see him. Nevertheless a Catholic carpenter, known to the Turks on account of his skill in making furniture, contrived to penetrate into his prison to console the confessor with a few affectionate words. He found him in prayer, prostrate on the earth, and bathed in his blood; and the jailor said that he had never ceased to pray since entering the prison.‡

Reader, if thou canst dare to do it in

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xxiii.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patav. Lib. iii. 13.

‡ Touron, tom. v. 36.

imagination, after all that thou hast heard, descend with me now into the dungeons of the Bastille. Behold, in farthest gloom, a nameless and abandoned sufferer, imprisoned and asleep!

“He sleeps!—who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone, and here he hath no friends;
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?—
No! 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face!”

This friar, who comes to minister here in tenderest pity, is Vincent Baron, the same who is so often seen going from his convent in the Fauxbourg St. Germain to the Bastille, and to other jails, to visit prisoners. People are alarmed for him sometimes, and bid him beware; but he closes his eyes against all danger to himself, and only thinks of his duty of visiting and consoling afflicted persons, whose own dearest relatives durst not openly solicit the government in their favour.*

Now is the day departing, the air embrowned with shadows, and all animals on earth are from their toils released. The friar alone, or the member of some holy brotherhood, prepares himself the conflict to sustain both of sad pity and that disgusting way, through precincts full of gloom and horror, where man's vengeance or suspicion frowns. That wherever the Catholic religion remains, the same works of mercy which were required by the constitutions of the ancient confraternities are still performed, proof has been given in modern times, and while I was writing this history. A devout pilgrim of the Holy Land, better known to France as an historian of the crusades, has described his visiting that ancient castle of the counts of St. Pol, on the river Somme, cited occasionally in the annals of the middle ages, but which in our days has become memorable from having received under the doom of perpetual imprisonment the ministers of Charles X. “On our first appearance in the town,” he says, “I found that we were taken for persons who came to visit the prisoners, and I remarked that this served as a good recommendation. Every one replied to our questions with an affectionate interest. Although the prisoners can only be seen from a distance, on the platform of the castle, all the inhabitants of the town know them perfectly, and take a lively interest in their fate. They send them flowers to deck their prison walls, and the finest fruits of the markets are reserved for them. Pious persons cause masses to

* Touron, tom. v. liv. xxxvii.

be celebrated, to obtain from God their deliverance; the poor follow with blessings those who are going to see them. They are visited not only by their relations, but by many other persons, who come from a great distance for the purpose. Some have travelled as far as two hundred leagues, for the sole object of passing an hour with one of these prisoners. I would gladly have visited all of them, but I had pledged my honour to confine my visit to the prince." Thus misfortune has its courtiers, wherever the Catholic religion exists; and each act of cruelty only presents a fresh field for the exercise of blessed mercy.

In the latter years of Gallican misrule, a young maiden named Sando, who made dresses for the court, was suspected of having facilitated certain communications with the members of the parliament exiled at Troyes, and on that charge was suddenly hurried off to the Bastille, where she fell sick and required an attendant. As she refused all service unless it was afforded by the presence of one of her attendants named Maugin, that young person was sent for; but on her arrival at the gates, the proper officer did not fail to remind her, that if she once entered within those walls, she could not again leave them, unless along with her mistress. Now bethink thee, reader, what cheer was hers at sound of those stern words, and at the aspect of those towers, darker still, those draw-bridges, and narrow apertures, through which the faint expiring beam of day descended to the dungeon deep below! She might well believe she never would return. Nathless in this extreme, her mercy failed her not. "Only grant me the pleasure," said she, "to embrace my young mistress. I will remain with her as long as you please—twenty years, if it must be so." She had to remain, however, but three months and twenty days.

In short, not to multiply these instances further, wherever the traditionary manners of faith prevailed, there were some persons endowed with mercy from heaven to a degree wholly supernatural, whose appearance was always simultaneous with scenes of extraordinary horror. In shades most pestilential, the medicinal grew near the poisonous herb; while over the general surface, mercy expanded its enchanting blossoms in profuse abundance, and characterized the soil.

Howard complained of the barbarous obduracy of his countrymen, whose general reply to all his representations of the woes of prisoners, used to be, "They must have deserved it, since they are in prison." He

found a very different spirit, among all classes of men, where the ancient faith prevailed.

The magistrates of Nola are said, by a writer in the sixteenth century, to discharge their office without remuneration; but he adds, also, that they accept and exercise it through charity, as if fathers correcting their children.*

When James the Great of Carrara was on his death-bed, having abdicated his power some time before, he ordered the doors of the house to be thrown open, and proclamation made, that if any man had been injured or defrauded by him, he should enter and state his grievance, that it might be repaired. Only one appeared at this summons, and he arrogantly demanded restoration of a fine which he had been condemned to pay; to whom James replied, "If justice had been done in your regard, you would not be here at present to make such a complaint; for you were guilty of a capital crime, and the penalty was commuted through compassion. Go thy ways, and amend. I am not conscious of having sinned, in respect to you, unless, perhaps, in having made your fine less than it ought to have been."†

In fact, the history of the middle ages will contain some inexplicable pages, if we do not bear in mind the fact presented even at the present day, that in Catholic countries a criminal, whatever may have been his guilt, is so sooner incarcerated than he becomes an object of general commiseration. As soon as the error is rendered harmless, men think only of the victim; and, ah! what reason do they not then discover for a tear of pity?—his youth, his abandoned state, the evil example which he saw around him, the neglect of those who ought to have instructed him; or, where no such palliative is found, the wiles of Satan, who ever goeth about seeking whom he may devour.

Acts corresponding to these views, which modern writers would assuredly deem extravagant, and even pernicious, are always commemorated, with peculiar fondness, by the ancient authors; of which an instance may be cited from Paradin's History of Lyons, which is thus quaintly related:—"A certain poor wretch escaping from the gibbet in the public square of Lyons, and the officers of justice calling upon the people to fly in pursuit, an Italian merchant, moved

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, Lib. iii. c. 7; in The-saur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Scard. de Antiq. Patav. Lib. iii. 13.

to compassion, scattered all the money in his purse among the people who pursued; and as he hastened for his life with still greater devotion than they ran for the prey, this merciful artifice was crowned with success. Not content with that, the Italian gave a crown to a lad to swim across the Rhone, in order to deceive the officers, who, on running to the other side, found only the poor pickpenny.*

Such commiseration every prisoner in Catholic countries can still hope to find in human breasts. When crime covers him with disgrace, and consigns him to the last punishment—when his heart sinks within him at the prospect of man's vengeance, and with a terror of future judgment, he has still a comforter and a friend in the priest, in the poor friar, or in the holy laic, who comes to him in obedience to the rule of his blessed order, or, moved by personal gratitude perhaps, and provided with mystic balms of consolation, like the hermit in the legend, who kissed the hands of a robber at his death, saying, "These are the hands which carry me to Paradise; for they often took my substance from me, and, when I was angry, struck me; and as patience was granted to me, I consider that they have conduced to my salvation."† The wretch is led within the prison, 'tis closed; he looks and sees the latticed bar, the bed of straw;—he dares not look again. The delusion of years vanishes in an instant: he turns, with sickening soul, within the cell, and sighs, "It is no dream—and I am desolate." But stay awhile:—the midnight passed, and to the massy door a light step comes; it pauses—it moves once more; slow turns the grating bolt and sullen keys. Who enters here?—it is the veiled penitent, who, through the love of Jesus, has come to give the prisoner alms and food—to bring him pictures of some saint or holy image; it is a hooded friar, to speak words of consolation to his soul—words of the Saviour, words of his blessed mother, words of his apostles—replete with hopes of atonement and grace, of peace and mercy. Or mark the worst!—

"'Tis morn—and o'er his altered features play
The beams, without the hope of yesterday.
What shall he be ere night?—perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing,
By his clos'd eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
Chill, wet, and misty, round each stiffen'd limb—
Refreshing earth, reviving all but him."

* Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. c. 23.

† Guy de Roye, le Doctrinal de Sapience.

The same friar, the same penitent, is at his side; and it is a mourning now full of rejoicing, for they have spoken to him of sin, and of its penalties—of the cross of Christ, and the way of the cross, which all that are Christ's must tread—the woe reserved for the hardened heart, and the subtle mystery of God in leading men by calamity and shame to peace. Human justice cannot complain, for the debt is paid, and society avenged; but heaven and heavenly spirits smile, for mercy in the soul and secret world reigns.

Connected with the administration and execution of justice, the spirit of Catholic countries, in regard to sympathy with the guilty, has, I am aware, been a source of offence to the modern philosophers; but it should be remembered, that however extreme may appear the development of mercy in this respect, it could hardly have exceeded, at least in its principle, what was not only recommended, but required by religion in ages of faith. The great guides of the middle ages are continually reminding men of the summary of our Lord's charge to his disciples—*misericordiam volo, et non sacrificium*—of those exhortations of Sacred Scripture, "Be merciful to one another, humble;* put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy"—of those solemn invitations from the Almighty, who desires above all titles that of the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation—the merciful and compassionate Lord, of long-suffering, who, commanding his creatures to show mercy, proposes himself for their example, saying, "*Estote misericordes sicut et Pater vester misericors est.*"† Hence the Ambrosian sentence, which the Jesuit Drexelius presses on the especial attention of princes, that the whole sum of the Christian discipline consists in mercy and piety.‡ Cresolius, another member of the same company, remarks, that the word holy, with the Hebrews, signifies merciful;§ and he proceeds to point out how many times holiness is used for mercy with the royal prophet, as in the psalm where he saith, "*Dominus mirificavit sanctum suum,*" which in the Hebrew is read, "*misericordem suum.*"

"If we investigate the reason and cause of mercy," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "we shall find that it includes in itself the perfection of all virtues; for he who is truly

* Pet. i. 3.

† Vin. Bellov. Spec. Morale. Lib. i. p. iv. dis.

‡ Drexelius, Gazophylac. Christi, p. iii. c. 6.

§ Anth. Sac. 518.

merciful feels and bears the miseries of all as if they affected himself, pardons all injuries, deploras all sins, wishes to all men plenitude of grace, injures no one, circumvents no one, is always poured out to all liberality, beholds all men as a father and mother behold their children.* Not that the mercy here spoken of was thought to arise from the effect of the imagination, placing men in the same situation as that of the sufferer, who was its object. A great French physician, faithful to the doctrines of Christian times, has well shown that even natural benevolence and pity have a higher source than the effect of a return on ourselves, as certain sophists have pretended, who explain every thing in the animal economy by the theory of personality. "Visit the hospitals," he says, disproving their assertion; "the most dreadful maladies you will pity most, and yet they are those from which it is nearly certain that you will be always preserved."† Nevertheless the grace of the blessed merciful was distinct even from the sublime faculty which consists in the innate want that we feel of sympathizing with the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures; and this the Catholic moralists are careful to show in their very

definitions, which always include as an essential principle a motive divine, which has no influence in the virtue of nature or preceding grace.

Thus, in the moral Mirror ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, the author, showing that no material sacrifice so much pleases God as mercy, adds this proviso—shown on account of God.* This is that mercy which was known to confer beatitude, of which Pope Leo says, "The force is such, that without it, there can be no other virtue," the grounds of which are shown in those solemn paintings that may be so often remarked over the ancient tribunals; as where the blessed Virgin, with joined palms, and head inclined as if regarding the earth, is seen on one side, while the last judgment is represented on the other.† In short, a glance at the crucifix explains the whole difficulty; and it may be remarked, that the symbol which has superseded it in the modern civilization, representing a woman blindfolded and holding a balance, is never found on any monument of the middle ages. No foolish Pagan allegory was then used, to instil proud thoughts into human breasts. The balance was for the hand of the archangel;—the justice of man was mercy.

CHAPTER IV.



FROM prisons let us pass to other scenes of woe, that we may contemplate the charity of the blessed merciful in ages of faith. Near-est to where we stand at present are the slaves. Let us visit them, and mark how Catholicism alleviates their sorrows, and gradually accomplishes the glorious, godlike work of their moral and social enfranchisement.

How wide a field was here opened for the exercise of mercy, may be inferred at once, if we only consider the fact that those nations of antiquity whose manners approached the nearest to the virtue of the Christian discipline—as the Dorians gene-

rally, and above all the Spartans—were nevertheless precisely those that were distinguished for the obstinacy with which they retained slavery. Humanity, indeed, was not one of the Dorian virtues; but no nation, no philosopher, no legislator, no founder of any religious system, seems to have conceived the idea that it would be either possible or well to abolish such a custom, so deeply and universally was it interwoven with the whole state and destiny of the human race.

To form a just estimate of the effects of Christian mercy in alleviating the misery of slaves, we should bear in mind what was the moral as well as social degradation of these wretched men in the ancient society.

* S. Bernard. *Senens. Serm. ix.*

† Alibert, *Physiologie des Passions*, tom. ii. 87.

* *Spec. Morale*, Lib. i. p. iv. 10.

† *In Thes. Antiq. Ital. v. Splend. Ven.*

Plato puts the saying in the mouth of an Athenian, that there is nothing sound in the soul of a slave, and that no man of sense will ever put confidence in any one of that race.* As Moëhler remarks, however, it is not strange that a legislator who would recommend a government to banish or put to death weak or sickly children, should regard slaves as being only half men.† Aristotle is most anxious to prove that slavery is, all throughout, conformable to nature. Hesiod says, that slaves are to the rich what oxen are to the poor. The master had full and uncontrolled power of life and death over the slave, and whatever the latter could acquire became his possession. Seneca describes their condition with the Romans in many families. "Unhappy slaves," says he, "are not allowed so much as to move their lips. The rod silences every murmur; and not even fortuitous sounds, such as a cough or a sneeze, are suffered to pass without stripes. All night long they must remain fasting and silent."‡

Notwithstanding the great revolution which was inevitably to result from the propagation of the Church, it is evident, however, that the apostles and first teachers of Christianity contemplated no other means of deliverance, for this class of men, than what would naturally and gradually follow from the operation of divine faith. No word that could encourage rebellion or acts of violence ever escaped their lips; they left the divine seed to fructify in its due season; and so well justified was their confidence, that as soon as religion began to exercise its influence upon society, we find the spontaneous mercy of individuals dictating and carrying into effect the measures which those who took a comprehensive view of the whole scheme and spirit of divine faith must have seen was conformable to it from the very first.

The apology of Origen, in the third century, supplies evidence that the Christians had become very active and successful in the conversion of slaves. "We confess," he says, "that we wish to instruct all men; and though Celsus may not wish it, we wish to show servants how, by acquiring a free mind, they may be ennobled by the Word."§ In fact, as Moëhler remarks, had not this interior emancipation preceded the reception of external liberty, the action of Chris-

tian mercy, in the deliverance of slaves would have brought upon the world unparalleled calamities; and the effects would have been the same as if hell itself had sent out all its inhabitants at once, and had given them their freedom upon earth. The council of Gangra, in the third canon, declared, that if any one, under pretence of piety, should teach a slave to despise his master, and not to minister to him with benevolence and all honour as to his master, he should be anathema. But what a new era dawned upon the world when the voice of the Christian teachers preached faith and freedom to the servile race! "Some one may say," observes Lactantius, "'Are there not amongst you, also poor and rich—slaves and masters? Is there not a difference, then, between each?' No! nor do we, on any other account, style one another brethren, excepting that we believe ourselves to be all equal; for as we measure all human things not by body, but by spirit, though there be a different condition of bodies, yet we have no slaves; since those whom we have we call brethren in spirit, and our fellow-servants. For God, who creates and inspires men, wished that all should be just—that is, equal; that no one should be separated from his celestial benefits. With him, no one is a slave—no one a master; for since he is the same father to all, by equal justice we are all his children."*

Since the time of the apostle Paul, no one conferred a greater service upon slaves than St. Chrysostom, who, in his preaching, continually expatiates upon the change which Christianity had effected in regard to them, whose deliverance and enfranchisement he shows to be an irresistible consequence of faith. "I know," saith he, alluding to this, "that I am displeasing to those who hear me; but what can I do? To this I am bound, and I will not desist."† God made man free. Abel, Seth, and Noah, had no slaves. It is certain that originally all were free; but sin, beginning with Adam, prepared the way for servitude, and entailed it on the human race in the threefold form of subjection—that of the wife to her husband, of the servant to his master, and of all men to the rulers of the state; all which relations are divine, as being rendered necessary by the fall.‡ Yet the

* De Legibus, Lib. vi.

† Geschichte der Aufhebung der Sklaverei durch das Christenthum.

‡ Sen. Epist. Lib. i. 47.

§ Adv. Cels. Lib. i. 54.

* Lact. Div. Instit. Lib. v.

† Hom. xl. in Ep. i. ad Cor.

‡ Hom. xxii. in Ep. ad Eph.; xxix. in Genes.; and Serm. iv. in Genes.

deliverance wrought by Christ includes exemption from what is evil in each of these. "In the Christian Church," says Chrysostom, "there is no slavery in the old sense of the word. There is only the name among the disciples of the Lord; the thing itself is abolished, in the same manner as death is now become only a name, having lost its terrors and its reality. No Christian is a slave; those that have been born again are all brothers. We attend not to the noble, but to the second birth. You say, 'My father is a consul—why does that affect me?' You have ancestors, no doubt, since you have come after them; but I may call a slave a nobleman, and a nobleman a slave, when I am informed as to their moral characters; for who is a slave, but he who commits sin? The other slavery is but an external and accidental affair.* Slave and free are only names. What is slavery?—a name. How many lords lie drunken upon their couch, while slaves stand by, fasting? Which shall I call the not free—the fasters or the drunkards? But Christianity makes no confusion—there are masters and servants still. The slave praises Christ as his master, and the freeman feels himself as the servant of Christ; so both are left free in subjection. Masters and slaves serve one another; and it is far better to be in this manner the slave, than under any other circumstances the master. Let us suppose that one man hath a hundred slaves, who serve him unwillingly, and that another has a hundred friends, who assist him with cheerful zeal: which would be happier? In the latter case, there is no anger, no chastisement, no threatening. The one serves through necessity, the other through gratitude. So God wills it. He himself washes the feet of his disciples, and says, 'He that will be your master, let him be your servant.'"

St. Chrysostom concludes his admonitions with these words—most important as Moëhler remarks, in judicial history:—"Let there be a reciprocal, and in that manner, no service—*ἵστω δουλείας καὶ ὑποταγῆς ἀντίδοσις οὕτω γὰρ οὐκ ἵσται δουλεία*. Let the master attend to the wants of the servant. Does the master renounce his obligatory service? Then in that case there is no law why the slave should be any longer a slave."

But it was not deemed sufficient to lay down these principles. In one of his homilies he blames those who proceed with a train of slaves to the market-place, and make

the brethren of Christ, the temples of the Holy Ghost, mere ministers to the vainest pride. He says that one or two slaves should be sufficient for the real wants of a rich master—nay, one slave can serve two or three masters. Whoever has more should cause them to be instructed in some handicraft, and give them their freedom;—nay, men should purchase slaves, and when they are well instructed in some trade by which they can gain a livelihood, set them free.*

The history of the middle ages supplies an interesting comment here; for Catholicism was not content with destroying slavery, but, as De Caux remarks, "it had secured by a thousand admirable modes of industry the lot of the newly enfranchised; and so long as society remained faithful to its voice, it knew how to preserve it from those dissensions between the rich and poor which were the disgrace and the scourge of the most flourishing republics of antiquity."

But to resume the discourses of St. Chrysostom. "When the multitude of believers at Jerusalem had all things in common, there were certainly no members of that community who had slaves." He excuses Abraham, by saying, that though he had a number of slaves, he used them not as such. In short, this great father of the Eastern Church went as far, in this respect, as it was possible for a bishop.

Moëhler, proceeding to trace the operation of the same principles in the West, produces several remarkable passages from the writings of St. Ambrose, who shows how they are to be reduced to practice in many of his works, as when he treats on Abraham, on Jacob, and the blessed life,† and on the patriarch Joseph.‡ "Slaves, therefore," he says, "have an origin whence they may glory. Joseph was a slave. They have whence they may be consoled; they have what they may imitate, that they may learn the possibility of a change of state without a change of manners, that there may be freedom and constancy in slavery. No condition causes an obstacle to the commendation of a man. Whether slave or free, we are all one in Christ; and there is no greater dignity than to serve him, for this is the servitude in which Paul found glory. Is it not the highest glory to be estimated so high that the blood of the Lord is the price of redemption?"§

After St. Ambrose, among the Latin

* Hom. xl. in Ep. and Cor.

† De Jacob. et Vit. Beat. Lib. i. c. 3.

‡ Lib. i. c. 4. § Exhort. Virginit. c. 1.

* Or. in Lazar. Hom. xviii. in Ep. i. ad Tim.

fathers, we meet nowhere with a nobler development of this doctrine than in the works of St. Augustin, and in the works of St. Peter Chrysologus, bishop of Ravenna, who laboured to extirpate the remaining spirit of Pagan severity in respect to slaves. The first known instance, among the great, of a real enfranchisement of slaves, was that of Hermes in Rome, prefect of the state, who was converted to Christianity by Pope Alexander, in the reign of Trajan, while this emperor was absent on his expedition against the Persians. Hermes went over to Christianity with his wife, and sister, and sons, and 1250 slaves, with their wives also and children; and on Easter-day, when they were baptized, he gave them all civil freedom; and as they had learned no trade, and beside had no capital, he enriched each of them with costly gifts. Another memorable example was given, in the time of Diocletian, by the prefect of Rome, Chromatius, who had been converted by the centurion St. Sebastian, and who was received into the Church along with all his family, composed of 1400 slaves of both sexes, whom he immediately set free, saying, that they who begin to have God for their father should cease to be the slaves of a man; and to these he gave all necessities.*

But even had we not such express records, the evidence would have been satisfactory. What new ideas and acts of mercy must have been in operation, before such a picture could have been presented to the world as that which the Church proposes in the office on St. Charles's Day, when she tells of Vitalis, a slave, and Agricola, his master, both arrested at Bologna, in the persecution of Diocletian, for preaching together Jesus Christ—when, after the slave had suffered with constancy all kind of torments, to death, the master, the fellow-servant of his slave, is fixed upon the cross, and shares with him in the glory of his martyrdom!

From the writings of St. Jerome, also, we can infer what multitudes of slaves were then receiving their liberty from rich families. St. Melanæ the younger, with consent of her husband, Pinius, discharged 8000 slaves; and she presented to her brother-in-law, Severus, many others, who chose not to be free. She had also possessions in many parts of Italy, Sicily, Gaul, Spain, Britain, and Africa. The holy Sampson, a contemporary of the Emperor Justi-

nian I., would not suffer, we are told, a troop of slaves to continue attending him, but deemed them all worthy of freedom, and gave them at once from his own property what was necessary for their future maintenance.* Justinian himself boasts that it had always been an object of his solicitude to raise from slavery to freedom as many as possible.† The mercy, however, of the Church and of the Christian society, was not content with delivering those who had been born slaves, but it sought also to redeem those who were become such by capture and imprisonment; and one object on which the riches of both were expended, was the ransom of such persons.

The Popes exercised the right of enfranchisement, and recommended to all men the same practice. "Since our Redeemer," says Gregory the Great, in one diploma, "the founder of all nature, wished for this end to assume flesh, that he might restore us to pristine liberty, it will be well done if men, whom from the beginning nature made free, and the law of nature subjected to the yoke of slavery, should be enfranchised by the benefit of manumission; therefore, by the intuition of piety moved, we make free from this day, and Roman citizens, you Montana and Thomas, servants of the holy Roman Church."‡ Constantine extended the law farther, and declared that no Jew could possess a Christian slave. Later ordinances applied this prohibition to heathens and Samaritans.

The great philosophers and legislators of the middle age transmitted these traditions, and continued to perfect the harmony between the external order of society and the principles of faith. It would be curious to compare the language of popes and councils respecting slaves and savages with the solemn discourses of the philanthropical presidents of modern states, who avowedly consign whole nations to destruction in the name of humanity and universal benevolence. St. Thomas showed that Christianity should necessarily induce freedom. He maintained that if a Jew who was a slave should receive baptism, he would become free, without ransom, from that moment. And, in point of fact, we have seen that the laws of Constantine had restored liberty to those who were kept in slavery, and permitted their enfranchisement in the Churches on the simple testimony of a bishop. Nevertheless, till so late as the seventh century,

* Acta SS. Boll. Jun.

+ Novell. 89.

† Greg. M. Ep. Lib. vi. 12.

* Bolland, Mai, Januar.

slavery continued to exist in many parts of the old Roman world, for it was not possible that the Church could at once wholly extirpate it. Nay, it continued to be necessary, as in the time of the apostles, to make no other opposition to it than by preaching the Christian doctrine, and leaving men to draw from it the natural inferences, and to exercise of their own accord the mercy which it was designed to inspire. That such inferences continued to be drawn by private persons, is proved by abundant testimony. The influence of the Catholic spirit, in this respect, may be gathered from any one of the innumerable instances on record, such as the description which St. Theresa gives of her own father; for though this is evidence of a modern date, it represents most faithfully the agency which had all along been in operation. "My father," she says, "was a man of much charity towards poor people, and compassion towards the sick, and especially so much so towards his servants, that he could never resolve to keep any slaves, for the tenderness which he had towards them; and there being once a slave in his house who belonged to his brother, he caused her to be treated and fed as if she had been one of his own children, and said, that through compassion he could not well endure to see her unless she might be made free."*

The Church, however, in receiving land from the barbarian converts, was even obliged to accept with it the institution which had become an integral part of the whole social and political system of the nations in which she found herself. She respected the common law of those nations, and made less use of absolute decrees than of the slow but more certain power which was imparted to her by faith and her influence on the human heart. By degrees, and as soon as it could be done without causing greater misery, she procured the abolition of slavery, first, by setting an example in generously relinquishing the right which the state annexed to her possessions, afterwards, in moving the consciences of the people, inducing them to imitate her, and finally, in prevailing on the state to legalize its suppression.

A recent historian remarks, to the honour of the Church in general, that during the middle ages, the condition of the serfs would have been intolerable, but for the ministers of religion. Though

forming a part of the feudal system, prelates and abbots were uniformly the protectors of the villains; and as one third of the lands throughout Europe were under their immediate controul, we may conceive how greatly the worst evils of that system were mitigated.* "In all ages and countries," he remarks, "the Church has been an indulgent landlord; so that the condition of the serfs in one fourth of France would not be oppressed. When the Church had no temporal jurisdiction, she yet considered it incumbent on her to interfere in behalf of the poor, and the bondsmen: wherever there was a rural community, there would be a Church and a resident pastor, whose influence in those days of religious feeling, would not be inferior to that of the resident judge or noble."

The serf held an intermediate state between the ancient slavery and the modern service. This kind of servitude inspired less compassion, and that is one cause, no doubt, of its long duration. Bathilde, wife of Clovis II. and Regent, during the minority of her son, had declared, by an ordinance, that henceforth slaves might possess property. Under the princes of the second race, personal servitude was either abolished, or greatly mitigated. A capitulary of Charles the Bald, in 864, gave permission to serfs to enfranchise themselves and reminded those who might not conceive themselves bound to give their money to a free man, in time of famine, that our Lord has said, by the mouth of the apostle, "can he who, having the riches of this world, shall see his brother in need, will shut up the bowels of his compassion from him, believe that the charity of God abideth in him?"† Under the third race, the care of providing for the liberation of the serfs seems to have been regarded as a part of the inheritance attached to the crown. In 1135, Louis le Gros enfranchised the serfs in his domains. Louis VIII. signalled the beginning of his reign by a similar enfranchisement. Queen Blanche, during the minority of St. Louis, hearing that many serfs, men and women, had been thrown into prison by their patrons, on not being able to pay the tax, ordered the prisons to be thrown open, and delivered them. Finally, in 1315, the celebrated ordinance of

* Lardner's Cyclop. Europe in the Mid. Ages, vol. i. 286.

† V. tit. 36.—Edict. Pictens, cap. 34.

* Life of the Holy Mother, S. Theresa, 1.

Louis X. made the enfranchisement of the serfs an express object of legislation. "Servitude began to disappear," says Ducange, "insensibly; moved by pity and mercy, or receiving a pecuniary compensation, the seigneurs granted full and entire liberty to their serfs; but it is remarkable, that on these occasions, the master used to present a request to the bishop, desiring that he would confer freedom on his slave, as if wishing to give the honour to religion, which had inspired them." A prince, at the end of the ninth century, expresses himself in these terms:—"In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, we Odo make known to all the faithful of the holy Church of God, present and future, that for the love of God, and in view of the eternal recompence, and by the suffrage of the bishop Rainon, we enfranchise the serf belonging to us, named Albert, and deliver him from all bondage." It was a pious custom of the great to accord enfranchisement, whenever they had received any great favour from God. A formula of Marculf recalls this usage,—"Divine Providence having procured us great joy by the birth of our son, in order to draw down the mercy of God, and that He may deign to preserve the life of this child, we ordain, that in each of our domains three serfs shall receive enfranchisement." It is delightful to find a full recognition, at all times, that it was to the influence of the Church this great work of mercy was to be attributed. The holy see, in fact, had always raised its voice against the crime of selling men for slaves, as even the French sophists of the last century acknowledged.* That odious traffic was denounced by the Church as antichristian. Among the ecclesiastical laws in England, of King Ine, in the year 643, we read, "If one buy a slave of his own nation, though a malefactor, and send him over sea, let him pay his weregeld, and make deep satisfaction to God."

It was through the representations of the archbishop Lanfranc, that William the Conqueror was induced to forego the traffic to Ireland in slaves. The redemption of foreign slaves was still left to the Church, and to the voluntary mercy of individuals. In England, a law of the Church prohibited the sale of ecclesiastical goods, unless the produce was to be applied to the ransom of serfs; truly a sublime exception, as the

Count of Stolberg remarks. Of the episcopal zeal in this respect, we discover early traces. When the Sarassins, having invaded the desert of Sinai, had carried off Theodulus, the eldest son of St. Nilus, who had withdrawn with them from the world, the sorrowful Nilus set out in search of him, and at length found him at Eleusis, with the bishop of that city, who had ransomed him from the infidels. This was in the fourth century. St. Paulin, bishop of Nola, moved with the tears of a widow, whose son was a prisoner, rendered himself up in his stead. After some time, the chieftain, whom he had served as gardener in Africa, gave him not only his own liberty, but that of all his fellow-citizens who had been slaves there, with whom he returned in great triumph; and the anniversary of the day of their entry into Nola had always been celebrated in that city with divine ceremonies, and popular games, down to the sixteenth century, when Ambrose Leo wrote; as it is, probably, to the present day.* Fortunatus, describing Sidonius II., archbishop of Mayence, dwells at great length upon his mercy to captives.

"Nudos veste tegis, captivis vincula solvens,
Deposito reddens libera colla iugo.
Exulibus domus es, et esuriens escas,
Felix cui Christus debitor inde manet."†

He renders a similar testimony to St. Nicetius, archbishop of Treves.—

"Captivus quicumque redit sua limina cernens,
Ille lares patrios, tu capis inde polos.
Hic habet exul opem, jejunans invenit escas
Qui venit esuriens, hinc satius abit."

The ardent zeal of St. Germain, bishop of Paris, at the close of the sixth century, for the redemption of slaves, is known to all students of history. "If the voices of all men were to be united in one," says the ancient writer of his life, "it would be impossible to say how prodigal he was of alms. Often contented with a tunic, he would cover some poor naked person with the rest of his clothes; so that while the indigent was warm, the benefactor was cold. No one can tell in how many places, or in what multitudes, he ransomed captives. The neighbouring nations, the Spaniards, Britons, Gascons, Saxons, and Burgundians, could attest how people ran to him from all parts, to be delivered from

* Bernardin de Saint Pierre, *Etudes de la Nature*, tom. i. 496.

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, Lib. ii. c. 13. In *Thesaur. Antiq. Ital.* ix.

† *Gallia Christiana*, i. 347.

the yoke of bondage. When nothing remained to him, he would continue seated, sorrowful and disturbed, with a more sad countenance and severe conversation. If by chance any one then invited him to a repast, he excited the guests, or the very servants, to contrive means to deliver a captive; and then the soul of the bishop was delivered from its depression. If the Lord sent to his hands any sum, he used to say immediately, Let us return thanks to the divine clemency, for we have now wherewithal to redeem some men; and immediately the effect followed his words. Then the wrinkles passed from his forehead; his countenance became more serene; he walked with a lighter step, and his discourse was more abundant and joyous; so that in redeeming others, this man appeared to be delivering himself from the yoke of bondage.*

St. Exuperus, bishop of Toulouse, sold the sacred vessels of the church, in order to redeem slaves from bondage; and his example was not rare. Bede relates, that whatever money St. Aidan received from rich men, used to be employed by him either in the relief of the poor, or in the redemption of captives. St. Otho, bishop of Bamberg, and apostle of Pomerania, is said to have softened even the most obstinate of the Pagans by his generosity in redeeming captives. When the coast of Kent was ravaged by the Danes, in the reign of Ethelred, St. Elphege, the archbishop of Canterbury, used frequently to repair to their camp with what money he could raise, in order to redeem his captive flock; but when he himself, with his monks, fell into their hands on the sack of the city, and was cast into a horrible dungeon, he refused to sign an order to the different churches of his diocese, that the treasures intended for the relief of the poor should be surrendered for his ransom. He would not, he said, purchase life on terms so disgraceful. From his childhood he had been the father of the needy: he would not, in his last days, deprive them of their resources. In similar circumstances, the blessed martyr, St. Lawrence, had hidden them: should he act so contrary to that example as to betray them?

Let us follow the history of the serfs. St. Wilfrid, the Northumbrian prelate, who had the happiness of converting Sussex, which was the last Pagan kingdom

that remained in England, was presented by the king Edilwalch, on receiving baptism, with the isle of Selsey, and two hundred and fifty slaves. These slaves he sedulously instructed in the doctrines and duties of Christianity; and on the day of their baptism, surprised both them and the whole nation by admitting them to civil freedom, declaring that they ought to be no longer bondsmen, who were co-heirs with himself of the kingdom of heaven. All the circumstances connected with the emancipation of serfs throughout christendom, were minutely recorded in the ecclesiastical archives. Each parish could point out its deliverer. Thus we read, that Ranulphe de Homblonieres, bishop of Paris, enfranchised the serfs of Chantelou;* and that John, dean of St. Peter, at Troyes, with all the chapter moved by piety, made a merciful decree, in 1194, giving entire freedom to all the serfs, on the domains of their Church.† Manumission was frequent, even by the lay proprietors. Thus, in the time of king Edgar, a landholder directs, that thirteen out of his thirty slaves should be freed by lot; and that the emancipation was complete is certain, from the fact that they were ordered to be placed in the highway, to go whithersoever they pleased. The charitable and pious often redeemed slaves from captivity. Thus, Edgyfu the Good redeemed Hig and Dunna, with their offspring, for thirteen mancuses. Manumission generally took place in the churches or by will, or by a written instrument. St. Bonitus, prefect of the province of Marseilles, in the time of king Sigebert, performed, we are told, the office rather of a priest than of a judge; for he never would order any one to be sold, as was the custom, or banished or detained captive; but on the contrary, if he found any persons sold, he used to redeem them.‡ In the second book, we had occasion to witness the prodigious charity of St. Eloy, when but a laic and a silversmith, in purchasing whole companies of slaves, in order to set them free. But it was above all to the Benedictine monks, and, in later time, to the Mendicant friars, that Europe was indebted for the alleviation, diminution, and final abolition of slavery in every form; and the records of their services, in this respect, though unknown to our modern

* Acta S. Ord. S. Benedict. tom. i. 244.

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xiii. 185.

† Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, p. 316.

‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 228.

statesmen and legislators, have extorted the admiration of learned historians in all ages and countries. Let us hear the words of the Rule, "non præponatur ingenuus ex servitio convertenti—quia sive servus, sive liber, omnes in Christo unum sumus: et sub uno Domino æqualem servitutis militiam bajulamur: quia non est personarum acceptio apud Deum."* Dom. Calmet, indeed, believes, that St. Benedict, in receiving slaves, required from them letters attesting the consent of their masters; as did St. Aurelian afterwards, not to give occasion to masters to complain, or to slaves to run away, under pretence of religion.† But from these few words of the rule, we can judge at once what a new era had opened upon the world, and how little impediment any such formalities could offer to the tide which began to set in the direction of universal deliverance. St. Bavon, a hermit, and parson of the city of Ghent, died in the middle of the seventh century. He had at first led a worldly life; and a contemporary relates, that one day he happened to see a man whom he had formerly sold, while he lived in the world. At this sight, he was seized with terrible remorse for having committed such a crime, and turning to the man, he threw himself on his knees, saying, "I am the man who once sold you, bound with cords. Remember not, I pray you, the evil that I did to you, and grant me now a boon. Strike my body with rods; shave my head, as if I were a robber, and cast me into prison, bound hand and foot, as I deserve. Perhaps if you do this, the Divine clemency will grant me pardon." The man replied, that he did not dare do such a thing to his master; but the man of God, who spoke eloquently, obliged him to promise that he would do as he had requested. Constrained, then, and in spite of himself, he bound the hands of the man of God, shaved his head, and, with his feet, tied to a stick, conducted him to the public prison; and the man of God remained there many days, deploring, day and night, these acts of a worldly life, which he had always before the eyes of his soul as a heavy burden.‡ "What a charm," exclaims a modern historian, "must this simple recital have had for men of the seventh century, who had servitude constantly before their eyes, and

who beheld all the atrocities and sufferings which attended slavery!" Many of the ancient monasteries were monuments of the redemption of men from slavery. "In the year 685, St. Berchaire abandoned the world, and came into the forest of Der, near Esparnay, where, meeting some soldiers, who led captive eight boys and eight girls, he ransomed them with the money which great lords had presented to him. The girls became nuns in an abbey, which the noble lady Valtide enabled him to found for them at Pellemonstier; that is, Puellare monasterium, which was in a part of that forest which she gave him, and the niece of this illustrious woman was made the first abbess. Also with the eight boys, he founded the abbey of Monstier-en-Der, for which he obtained many privileges from King Childeric II., who even gave to him his royal hunting lodge of Puisié in that forest, on the site of which the saint built a Church, dedicated to God, under the title of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul."* St. Fale, of whose mercy we have already heard instances, was of a noble family of Auvergne; but while a child, he was taken prisoner by some soldiers of King Thierry, and reduced to bondage. At this time, he was a little shaven clerk, and it was his delight to serve the holy ministers of the Church, so that it cost him many tears and sighs when he was torn away into a strange land by barbarous soldiers. Being led to Troyes, he was sold there as a slave, at the time when the holy abbot Aventin was forming a congregation with his monks. This holy man one day, by celestial guidance, went out of his monastery, and seeing some people conducting a chain of young captives, he stopped and accosted the owners. "Now, Sir," said the men, "if you wish to buy this boy for your Church, we will let you have him cheap to content you." The venerable abbot, moved with compassion, and admonished, as it is said, previously by a dream, pulled out twelve crowns of gold, and thus the miserable avarice of these robbers was satisfied, and the little captive was delivered up to him. The holy man received him as his spiritual son and a child of God, and gave him the habit of religion instead of his chains, and his own paternal sweetness instead of the rigour of these cruel masters. The child grew up, and, by the grace of God, advanced in such piety and obedience, that

* Cap. 11.

† Calmet, Comment. sur la Règle de S. Ben. i. 2

‡ Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Bened. tom. ii. p. 400.

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse, de Troyes. 191.

in process of time, on the death of the venerable Aventin, he succeeded him in the office of abbot, which he discharged till his death with the utmost humility and holiness.* On one occasion, a servant, through accident, committed a fault against his master; and knowing him to be of a choleric disposition, fled in terror to the abbey, and entreated St. Fale, the abbot, to protect him. In this instance, the minister of heaven's mercy was outraged in consequence; but the prayers and intercession of the saint were said to have eventually delivered the sufferer.† St. Filibert, abbot of Jumièges, in the seventh century, not content with labouring for the salvation of the people of Neustria, used to send his monks beyond sea, provided with money, to ransom captives; many of whom became monks in that house. One of them, named Sydonius, who was ransomed in Ireland, distinguished himself at Jumièges, by his zeal and science. St. Ouen, who often visited this monastery, became acquainted with his merit, and established him abbot in a monastery of his diocese, which had been built by King Thierry III., where this monk died in odour of sanctity, and the place bears the name of Saëns from him to this day.‡ St. Richarius, besides his monastery near Abbeville, had also a house on the sea shore, partly that he might be lodged there when about to cross over to preach to the Britons, and partly to enable him to redeem captives, of whom he used to deliver vast numbers, and some of them he placed in his monastery.§

By the very act of embracing the monastic state, men felt bound to enfranchise all who had been subject to them personally. When the duke St. William, in the time of Charlemagne, became a monk at Gellon, besides distributing abundant alms to the poor, he gave liberty to his former serfs; and it was not till after these acts, that he left his country, to follow the cross of Christ in truth.|| Calmet proves, however, that from the time of St. Benedict slaves used to be given to monasteries, to cultivate the lands at a distance, on which, consequently, the monks could not labour. These slaves formed part of the

property given to religious houses, and could not be separated from it.* Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, remarks, that the Greek monks have no slaves, but that the Latins have. The councils of Adge, and of Epaone, prohibit abbots from enfranchising such slaves, on the ground that it would not be just if they should stand idle while the monks worked every day in the fields. Ecbert, archbishop of York, and St. Isidore, of Seville, regarded it as injustice in abbots, who have no personal property, and who conferred nothing on their monasteries, to diminish their possessions by enfranchising the slaves, who belonged not to them individually: but, notwithstanding these prohibitions, as Calmet observes, most monasteries gradually enfranchised their slaves; and the rule of St. Ferreole, in forbidding abbots to enfranchise a slave of their monasteries, adds a proviso, which explains how they did so; for he says, that it must not be done without the consent of the monks, or unless the abbot procures a substitute de propria facultate.† This latitude was sufficient; and, accordingly, the work of emancipation proceeded rapidly. When large estates were given to the new monastery founded by St. Benedict, of Aniana, about four leagues west of Montpellier, he immediately enfranchised the serfs attached to them. In much later ages, we find the zeal of the monastic houses still employed in emancipating the serfs whom they found on the lands, which, from time to time, were bestowed upon them. In the reign of Philippe-le-Hardi, we find the abbey of St. Maur, and the chapter of Paris, granting letters of manumission to their serfs at Creteil; and in the year 1282, the same abbey enfranchising its serfs at Valenton.‡ In 1244, Thomas de Mauleon, abbot of St. Germain, had enfranchised all the vassals of the parishes of St. Antony and of Verrieres.§ In 1248, the inhabitants of Courbevoys were delivered from servitude by the abbot of St. Denis;|| and in 1247, the inhabitants of Nanterre were enfranchised by Thibaud, abbot of St. Geneviève, on condition, that when required, they would come to the defence of the abbey.¶ In 1248, William, abbot of St. Denis, gave

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, p. 115.

† Id.

‡ Deshayes, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Jumièges, 10.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Richarii apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

|| Mabill. Act. S. Ord. S. Bened. Sæcul. iv. pars 1.

* Comment. sur la Règle de St. Ben. i. 11.

† Reg. S. Ferreol. c. 36.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xii. p. 45.

§ Id. tom. ix. 355.

|| Id. tom. vii. p. 109.

¶ Id. vii. 122.

letters of manumission to all the serfs of Villeneuve-St. Denis.* Similar details are found in the local records of all other countries, where each monastery was a centre, not only of light and piety, and spiritual emancipation, but also of temporal deliverance from the state of bondage. Notwithstanding, however, the zeal and efficacy of the monastic institute in general, it was found expedient, in subsequent times, to found new orders, for the express purpose of delivering captives from the hands of the Sarassins; for, as the Danes and Normans, in the earlier ages, used to carry off from the coasts of England and France, and enslave, whole hosts of inhabitants, so, in later times, these new enemies of the Christian name used to descend upon the shores of the Mediterranean, for the purpose of procuring slaves; and scarcely, at present, can any one form an adequate estimate of the horrors and desolation which they produced in Sicily, in Campania, and Calabria, and generally along the coasts of Italy and Spain.* It was while saying his first mass, that St. John of Matha was inspired with the design which he afterwards effected, according to the advice of a holy hermit, named Felix de Valois, of redeeming the Christians who had fallen into the hands of the Mahometans; and with this view, he founded the order of the Trinitarians, and passed twice to Tunis. This was so early as in the twelfth century. It has been calculated, that in the interval of 437 years, this order of the Trinitarians ransomed from the Sarassins 30,720 slaves.

The bare estimate of itself must excite our admiration; but what would be our feelings, if we could behold the instruments in actual operation here?—I mean, if we were eye-witnesses of the acts of sacrifice, and heroic charity, by which this great work was effected!

"I once knew, and you, my sisters, have seen," says St. Theresa, "a certain monk, of the order of the blessed Father Peter of Alcantara, who came to see me one day, bathed in tears through the violent desire which he entertained of delivering a captive by taking his place. We conferred about it together, and at last his general granted permission on his urgent prayers. But when he was about four

leagues from Algiers, God took him to himself; and who can doubt of the recompence which he received?"* In fact, this action was but strictly according to the vow of the fathers of mercy. This latter order was instituted by St. Raymond of Pegnafort, St. Peter Nolasco, and King James I. of Arragon. It was first announced by St. Raymond, in the cathedral of Barcelona, on the feast St. Laurence; and the multitude received the intimation with enthusiastic acclamations.† The king, at Barcelona and other places, built convents, and richly endowed them, for the brethren of this order. A certain number was to be chosen every year, who should go to the Sarassins to redeem the poorest; and each took a vow, in addition to the three of continence, poverty, and obedience, that if in the redemption of captives money should fail, when despair might induce any one to deny the faith, the brother was to redeem that captive first, and remain in his place till money could be transmitted to ransom him also. This good king James had himself experienced imprisonment for more than forty months, while in the age of tender youth, from Simon Montfort, at great peril of his life, at Carcasson, and also from the master of the Templars, in the citadel of Montion, that he might escape the snares of Sanctius and others; and during his captivity he had vowed to God, commending himself to the blessed Virgin, that he would found this brotherhood on his deliverance.‡

When St. Dominick was a youth, studying at Palentia, his charity being such that he sold all the books in his study to relieve the necessities of the poor during a great dearth, that he might see himself poor with the poor, there came a woman to him weeping bitterly, and beseeching his assistance for the redemption of her brother, then captive by the Moors; and the charity of this holy young man was so great, that he earnestly besought the afflicted woman to sell him for a slave, and to exchange him for her brother: such was the force of charity in that pure and holy soul!

The blessed Matthew Carrieri, a friar of his order, after preaching with won-

* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. xv. 3.

† Gabriel. *Barrii de Antiq. et situ Calabriae*, Lib. I. in *Theas. Antiq. Italicae*, ix. Placidi Regna, *Notitia Hist. Messanae* in *Id.* tom. x. Leandri Alberti *Descript. Italiae*, pp. 21. 208. 356.

* St. Theresa's *Thoughts on the Love of God*, chap. iii.

† Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i.

‡ Bernardini *Gomesii de Vita Jacobi I. Arragon.* Lib. ii.

drous fruit in the states of Milan, Venice, and Tuscany, was entreated by the Genoese to visit their city for the same purpose: in compliance with which petition, he embarked from the Tuscan coast, with the intention of landing at Savona; but God permitted that the ship which was conveying him thither should fall in with a corsair's roving crew, which pursued and attacked her. What first follows, need not be described—the shriek of terror, and the mingling yell;—

"For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell—
Flung o'er that spot of sea the air of hell!"

In brief, the spoil is won;—Carrieri and his two companions, and all the passengers, are thus apparently doomed to perpetual slavery; but the holy friar—

"Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd"—

speaks before the chief with so much grace and dignity, that without asking for his liberty, it is granted to him, as also to the two friars who are with him. These three are on the point of retiring, after having in vain solicited the deliverance of the other passengers, when lo! a woman's gentler anxious tone is heard,—“O friend of God, for blessed charity save my mother!” “Nay, but my daughter!” cries another voice—and, at the same moment, a lady and a most beautiful maiden threw themselves at his feet, and conjured him to have pity on them. The monk is never insensible. At the risk of irritating, by his importunity, the barbarian, who might easily be excited to retain himself, the friar returns to him, calmly meets the curious eyes that question of his coming seek, and repeats his entreaty, begging him to release at least two persons; but his prayer producing no effect on the corsair, the man of God offers himself instead of these two captives, and entreats permission to remain in their place. To feel the force of such an act, we should observe that the poet who describes of late the corsair has rather diminished than exaggerated the fearful character of the man; for he omits all mention of his avarice, which is the most appalling trait of all. Yet saith he,—

“There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye;
There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That rain'd emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled, and mercy sigh'd farewell!”

Nevertheless, that pirate chief—man of loneliness and mystery—scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh—the slave of gold, the slave of lust—whose name appals the fiercest of his followers, and tints with sallower hue each swarthy cheek—beholds, with looks none ever marked in him before, that friar, whose countenance is pale with penance, not from fear, whose noble form is not wholly concealed by the coarse dark habit that wraps a breast bestowed on heaven alone. The heart of this terrible chief is softened, avarice yields to generosity, and he consents to set free, not alone the women, but all the prisoners, without exception;—

“What was the spell that thus his soul could bind?—

The power of thought, the magic of the mind.”

The history goes on to relate how the friars proceed by land to Genoa, where the fame of this action had already spread; and how the first sermon of the preacher recalls innumerable souls to the cross of Jesus, to the ways of charity and faith.*

Don Faustus de Pagola, on his voyage to the Canary Islands, was taken by corsairs, and conducted in slavery to Algiers. His wife's brother, Thomas Carbonel, was a holy friar, who on the first intelligence of the event, was going to imitate the founder of his order, and offer himself instead of the captive; but his advanced age was an insuperable obstacle. The barbarians demanded 8000 crowns for his ransom, and the family could not furnish such a sum. The exertions of the friar, however, succeeded in obtaining it from many bishops and grandees of Spain; and the gentleman, after five months, was enabled to return to his family.†

Sometimes, however, the good offices and devotion of the merciful only turned to the profit of the infidels. Of this we have an instance in early times. Rodland, archbishop of Arles, taken prisoner by the Sarassins in 869, was kept in chains on board their ship, the infidels requiring for his ransom 150 pounds of silver, 150 cloaks, 150 swords, and 150 serfs. After some time, he died in their hands; but the Sarassins concealed his death, and only threatened to pursue their voyage immediately, unless the ransom were paid. Having at length received it, they sent the

* Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. Dom.* tom. iii. liv. 22.

† *Id.* tom. v. liv. xxxix.

bishop to shore, sitting on his chair, and clothed in the sacerdotal vestments in which he was taken. Those who had sent the ransom hastened to congratulate him, but found only the dead body, which they then buried, with great lamentations, in the sepulchre which he had prepared for himself.*

Angelo Calessius, bishop of Santerini, in the Archipelago, was a Dominican friar, inhabiting his native city of Nicosia, the capital of the Isle of Cyprus, when, in 1570, it was besieged and taken by the Turks. After beholding his dear mother, Lucretia Calessia, and all his relations massacred, while he offered himself to the swords of the infidels, he was seized, stripped, loaded with chains, and placed among the other captives. He passed, at first, through many hands; but in fine, Osmá, captain of a Turkish galley, purchased him, and led him as his slave to Constantinople. In a short time he proved so agreeable, that his master began to treat him no longer as his slave; he made him even sit at table with him, and allowed him to go out as often as he wished; but Angelo, full of faith and charity, only availed himself of this permission to visit every day the other captives, consoling them to the utmost of his power, and teaching them to render their sufferings meritorious by patience and submission to the order of Providence. Nevertheless, the general of the Dominicans, Seraphin Cavalli, and Pope Pius V., had not forgotten the holy friar, whose name had been long known in Rome. They sent four hundred gold crowns for his ransom, and on the 8th of January, 1571, Osmá set him free. Calessius might then have either returned to Cyprus, or enjoyed a better lot in some city of Italy; but the charity of Jesus Christ made him resolve on adopting a different course. He feared that the sufferings of the captives, consigned to fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom, might induce some of the weak to deny the faith; and he determined to remain at Constantinople, and expose his repose, his liberty, and his life, for the salvation of his brethren. During an entire year he remained there, always occupied in works of mercy, soliciting the charity of ambassadors and rich merchants, and then carrying their alms down to the deep dungeons of the poor captives, some of whom he restored to liberty; and many

young men who had become apostate he recalled to faith. After the battle of Lepanto, the Turks, however, became more rigorous and suspicious; they forbade him thenceforth to visit any of their slaves; and at length they accused him formally of being an enemy of the Prophet, and a papal spy. Either charge was sufficient to cost him his life; so, on the 3rd of February, 1572, he was again loaded with chains, and thrown into an obscure dungeon. However, he had many friends; and as soon as his detention was known, they spared no effort to save him. Some noble citizens of Ragusa, who were then at Constantinople, gave a great sum for his ransom; and Abamachi, now king of the Algerians, joined his credit to the solicitations of the French ambassador; and the judge consented, at last, to deliver the prisoner, but on condition that he was instantly to quit the Turkish dominions. Unable, therefore, any longer to visit the captives in prison, he adhered to his resolution of serving them still; and for this purpose went to Italy, where he first repaired to Pius V., and then visited Naples, Bologna, Florence, Milan, and Venice, in order to inform the rich citizens of Cyprus, who were then living in those cities, of the situation of the captives; and his efforts were crowned with such success, that every one gave in just proportion to his means; so that he was able to send over great sums to ransom them. Stephen de Lusignan, whom he met in Italy, co-operated with him in this work of mercy. This was a holy and learned Dominican, of the royal house of Lusignan, whose ancestors had reigned in Cyprus. Born in Nicosia, where he had been received at an early age into the order, he had followed his ancient master, the bishop of Megara, into Italy, before the capture of the island. Two of his brothers, Hercules and John Philip, were slain fighting in its defence; and many of his nephews had been carried off slaves to Constantinople. These two friars exerted themselves during many years, and from time to time had the gratification of receiving many whose chains they had loosed at Constantinople. In order to obtain relief from Christian princes, they also employed their pens; and Calessius wrote two narratives, in Greek, at the end of the *Universal History*, published by Stephen de Lusignan; containing an affecting picture of the storming of Nicosia and Famagouste, to the former of which the author was an

* Gallia Christiana, Id. i. 44.

eye-witness. These narratives Stephen de Lusignan translated into Italian and French, and they brought to the friar abundant alms, which were employed in delivering or consoling the slaves, many of whom, forming whole families, were enabled in consequence to return to their country.*

These are delightful histories, and we might multiply them without end from the annals of any one religious order. Peter Pascal, the holy bishop of Jaen, having dispensed all his revenue in charity, and wishing still to be useful to his brethren, repaired to the Turks. He is loaded with chains; but the clergy and people of his Church send a sum of money for his ransom. "The saint," says Heliot, "received it with gratitude; but instead of employing it to procure his own liberty, he redeemed with it a number of women and children; fearing lest, through weakness, they might abandon the Christian belief; while he remained in chains till the barbarians gave him the martyr's crown."

In fact, as the religious principle was the actuating power, so the eternal salvation of human souls was the object, of these men of mercy. This order of the brethren of our Lady of Mercy, instituted by King James the First of Arragon, to redeem Christian captives from the Moorish pirates, or from the Sarassins of Valencia, who made frequent descents upon Catalonia and Arragon, had for its chief motive, "*ne tormentis seu diuturna servitute oppressi, Christianam religionem et fidem abnegarent.*"† Frequently, too, the charity of private individuals unconnected with any religious fraternity, took this direction in consequence of some domestic deliverance. Gilbert des Essarts, a noble knight of the diocese of Evreux, was taken prisoner by the Turks, in the first voyage of St. Louis to the Holy Land, and after a long captivity, was miraculously brought back to his estate of Pontiere, on the evening of the day on which his wife had contracted a second marriage. He presented himself before her, weakened and reduced, with a sunk visage, and having a long beard, leaning on a pilgrim's staff six feet high, and loaded with chains on his hands and feet. That noble dame could not have recognised him, if it had not been for his presenting her with the half of a gold ring, of which he had left the other in her hands on setting out on his voyage, and which she had carefully pre-

served. Through gratitude for this happy reunion, they founded on their estate a house and chapel for the redemption of captives, which existed till the Revolution.*

The holy see, from time to time, reminded kings and people of their duties in respect to captives. Pope Innocent III. writes in these terms to the patriarch of Jerusalem, who had besought his aid in behalf of the Christian captives:—"Whosoever delivers any of the faithful from prison, will be delivered by Christ from hell. Since, therefore, this consolation of humanity is due to captives from the office of charity, and from the Lord's precept, those seem transgressors who are unwilling, when they have the power, to redeem captives; for which, according to the canonical constitutions, ecclesiastical, goods ought to be resigned, which in other cases cannot lawfully be alienated. For there would be reason to fear that they were not subject to divine justice, if in any way they should pass a judgment contrary to this, making void the law of God on account of traditions of men, wishing to consult for things rather than for persons, and loving riches more than souls, as would appear evident to demonstration if they should be unwilling to deliver, for the sake of redeeming their brethren, what they resign willingly for the sake of acquiring money." Therefore, desiring to provide for the salvation of both the captives and the free, he charges him to admonish and exhort kings and princes, and all the Christian people, in the name of the Lord, to take such measures as are necessary for the deliverance of the captives, and to come forward generously to their assistance.†

As if to complete this picture, we find instances of the most exalted mercy exercised by the heroic princes of Europe towards the very men who were capturing Christians in order to enslave them. Of this a memorable example was furnished by Andrew Doria, when Draguthes the corsair fell into his hands. "Knowing," says Sigonius, "his ferocious manners and innate barbarity, he feared to let him loose at once, lest he should return to his piracy; and on the other hand, he could not think of putting him to death, or of keeping him in prison for ever. From the former plan his clemency revolted, for if he adopted that, he thought he should be as cruel as Draguthes himself; and from the latter he was dissuaded by the idea that Hariadenus and

* Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D.* tom. iv. liv. xxxii.

† Bernardini Gomesii de *Vita Jacobi I. Arragon.* Lib. ii.

* *Hist. d'Evreux*, 209.

† *Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xiv.* 147.

all other pirates would then boast that they only followed the example of the Christians in keeping prisoners chained in their dungeons. Moreover, he hoped that it might be possible to change the nature of Draguthes. So he ordered that he should be brought before him, and then, with a most gentle and benign voice, he calmly remonstrated with him on the cruelty of his former ways; telling him that nature had made all men free, and that, therefore, it was an iniquitous custom to reduce any man to slavery, and to extort money for ransoms. He implored him to renounce such measures in future, and to remember that he and other men were created equal by God; so that, though they might have hired servants for their just wants, they could have no slaves consistent with any justice. Draguthes replied that he would follow his counsels, and would be ready to endure all torments if ever again taken by him, after having violated his promise. So he set him free." In the mercy of Andrew Doria, whatever may have been his faults in other respects, it is easy to recognise the man who daily assisted at mass, recited the seven penitential psalms, and the solemn hymns to the blessed Virgin.*

But amidst these affecting examples, we must not forget to mention the religious orders of knighthood, which were similarly employed throughout the north of Europe, not only redeeming captives, but abolishing servitude. Charges having been made before the Pope against the Teutonic order in Prussia, the reply of the knights was in these terms:—"As to what is said that the brethren oppress their neophytes under the yoke of slavery, we reject it as wholly incredible; since the liberty with which Christ has delivered us we grant to them, even unwilling to receive it, and ready to resist if they had occasion, and since we provide for them mercifully and paternally in all spiritual and temporal things."†

We come, at length, to consider the action of the civil power, which alone could complete the work of the blessed merciful in regard to slavery. One result from that influence of the clergy in the state, which we remarked in the last book, was the adoption by rulers of a resolution to perfect and extend the measures of emancipation which had emanated from the Church; and we must never forget that, in every instance, the motive assigned for such acts of spon-

taneous liberality was religion, and drawn from those principles of faith which the clergy had been occupied in instilling. Witness the decree of Philippe Augustus, published at Paris in the year 1180:—"For the good of the soul of our father, King Louis, and of our own soul, and of the souls of all our predecessors, we for ever absolve from all yoke of servitude all the serfs of Orleans, and of the villages near it. We wish them to be as free as if they had never been our serfs; and we pledge ourselves never to commit any violence upon the inhabitants of Orleans."*

In like manner, all the early acts of enfranchisement of slaves, as well as those of donations to Churches and to the poor, began with the words, "*Pro remedio animæ nostræ: pro remissione peccatorum meorum.*" In fact, the adversaries of the Catholic Church in modern times have been forced to admit that it was by means of the very rites and discipline which they had renounced, that men were prevailed upon to abolish slavery. Sir Thomas Smith, secretary to Edward VI., says, that "the holy fathers, monks, and friars, had in their confessions, and especially in their extreme and deadly sickness, convinced the laity how dangerous a practice it was for one Christian man to hold another in bondage; so that temporal men, by little and little, by reason of that terror in their consciences, were glad to manumit all their villeins." Will it be believed, that after this admission he could add, "But the said holy fathers, with the abbots and priors did not in like sort by theirs; for they also had a scruple in conscience to impoverish and despoil the Church, so much as to manumit such as were bound to their Churches and to the manors which the Church had gotten, and so kept their villeins still."† Melancholy but important testimony! for it proves to what an extravagance the blind aversion of these supporters of the new system proceeded, and with what assurance they were accustomed to reckon upon the ignorance or the prejudice of their contemporaries.

The movement of these blessed wheels, which wrought deliverance to captives during the period to which we look back has now been in some measure seen; but, reader, wouldst thou remain looking at them longer still, in order to observe how the Catholic religion continued to operate in this respect towards the conclusion of these grand ages?

* Sigonii. de Reb. Gest. And. Dorie. Lib. ii.
† Voigt, Geschichte Preussens, iii. 146.

* Collect. du Louvre, tom. xi. 226.
† Commonwealth, book iii. c. 10.

Open, then, the history of America, which shows the discovery of a new world. Christianity arrives there at the same time with Cortez and Pizarro ; and while the ferocious conquerors charge the timid Indians with irons, religion, by the bulls of its sovereign pontiffs, by the voice of Las Casas, and of the holy friars of the two orders, accuses the conquerors and defends the victims.

Francis de Victoria, a learned Dominican and most celebrated professor in the university of Salamanca, whose brother Diego, of the same order, was preacher to the emperor Charles V., did but repeat the doctrine of the middle ages in his fifth lecture on theology, when he showed at great length that difference of religion is no just cause for war, which can only be legitimate, he says, when some very great injury is inflicted on the state, or on its allies ; and he concludes by saying, that when conqueror the king must act the part of a just arbiter between himself and the vanquished, and bear carefully in mind that generally all the fault is on the side of the prince, and that the poor people suffer from his ambition. In his fourth lecture he had treated on the right which the kings of Spain could have over the persons and property of the Indians ; and though a Spaniard, he proves that neither barbarism nor infidelity, nor any other error of these nations, nor their refusing to receive the gospel, can give any right whatever to the Catholic kings to make war upon them, or to seize their lands.*

The Dominicans, in particular, who were deputed to evangelize the Indians, protested against the maxims of their greedy and barbarous countrymen. Braving all personal considerations, they proceed so far as to refuse absolution to those Spaniards who would hold the Indians in slavery ; while King Ferdinand and his council, yielding to the views of a political interest, declare that they will take on their own conscience the risk of what might be unlawful in this slavery, and that, consequently, the Dominicans and the monks of the other orders ought to abstain, in future, from the invectives which "a charitable but little enlightened zeal had induced them to pour forth against this custom."

The allotted time would fail me, reader, if we should wait to see pass before us the train of these men of mercy. One glance at the chiefs of this procession would dis-

cover such men as Julien Garces, the Dominican, first bishop of Tsascala, in New Spain, who carried his complaints of the cruelty of his countrymen before the royal council of the Indies, and then before Pope Paul III., to whom he addressed his work in favour of the oppressed Americans ; or Vincent Val-verda, of the same order, first bishop of Cusco in Peru, who endeavoured to save the unhappy savages from Pizarro ; and when his efforts were unavailing, returned to Spain to solicit the King of Castile to interfere in their favour ; and who, after being obliged to wait four years for his answer, at length, on succeeding, and being declared by a royal rescript protector of the Indians, hastened back to alleviate their sorrows ; when, after devoting himself for some time to these works of mercy, he was martyred in the Isle of Puna, and devoured by cannibals, and so passed to the God whom he had served by mercy. Would that I could set before you, if not the heroic labours of the first bishop of Chjassa, Bartholomew de Las Casas, which would require our fixed attention many days, at least the magnanimous deeds and immortal discourses of the friars and prelates who co-operated with him ; such as Peter of Cordova, Garcias de Loaysa, confessor of Charles V., and the Archbishop of Seville, Don Diego Deza, and the friar Antonio de Montesino, who, in his second sermon before the admiral royal treasurer, and all the Spanish authorities, boldly challenged them to say by what right men who came from Spain, because they had no bread there, proceeded to fatten themselves on the substance of a people born as free as themselves. It is true, in general, the kings of Spain and the Spaniards who formed the majority, cannot be convicted of the guilt of having countenanced these horrors. Certainly not a little striking is the fact, that when a Spaniard and a canon of Salamanca was found capable of composing a book to maintain the justice of the war against the Indians, the government did not permit him to print it. At that time Las Casas, discouraged and overwhelmed with grief, had withdrawn from the spectacle of cruelties which he could not prevent, and was residing in his convent of Valladolid ; but no sooner did he hear of this intended publication, than he came forward to oppose it, and in that resistance he was nobly seconded by the archbishop of Seville. On their remonstrance, the royal council referred the question to the universities of Alcala and Salamanca ; and these two faculties, after examining the book,

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xxv.

decided that its doctrine was pernicious. Sepulveda, for that was the author's name, made repeated efforts to obtain permission from Charles V.; but, when all were unavailing, he sent his manuscript to a friend in Rome, where it was secretly printed; but all copies were ordered to be suppressed, as soon as the fact was known. Some, however, were introduced into Spain, and then Las Casas took up his pen. Sepulveda, however, still defending his doctrine, the two parties were permitted to dispute before the emperor, when all the eloquence of Sepulveda, who was called the Spanish Cicero, could not prevent the council from deciding against him, and thus confirming, by their sentence, the decision which had been long before given by the great light of Salamanca, Francis de Victoria.* But our limits can only admit of this passing allusion to names for ever associated with the benediction of the merciful. It is a subject which might occupy volumes, and from which, at the end of all, one could not turn without regret.

It is not, however, alone in regard to prisoners and slaves, that the action of the blessed merciful is presented to the notice of an historian, as affecting the public conduct of rulers, and men in power, during the middle ages. The great work of protecting all the weak and poor from oppression, for which God sent the first of his angels that was seen on earth,† still remained; and frequently, it must be acknowledged, the labours of the clergy, in this respect, were admirably seconded by those later angels who appeared, from time to time, crowned for an instant with a mortal crown, to show to the world how man could be transfigured by faith and love. One of the first acts of the Emperor Lewis the Pious, was the sending officers to all parts of the empire, to make restitution to all who had been oppressed by corrupt agents during the last years of his father's reign;‡ and Saint Louis, before embarking for the crusade, sent mendicant friars throughout his whole kingdom, to make inquiry of the poor, whether any of them had suffered injury in the king's name, and if so, at his expense to repair it. Some poor peasants came once, all in tears, to complain to Hedwige, the young queen of Poland, that the king's servants had seized their cattle. She ran to her husband, and obtained their

immediate restitution. "Then," she said, "the cattle are restored to them, but who will give them back their tears?" You perceive how immense was the pity of these hearts, inflamed with divine love. On a former occasion, when considering the prerogatives of nobility in feudal times, we observed, that it did not exclusively enjoy such benefits from the state; and, in fact, the poor, and all persons comprised in the category of the miserable, formed then a privileged class. By the common, imperial, and municipal laws, the protection of the weak was declared the duty of all princes;* and so many privileges were granted by the ancient Catholic legislations, in favour of persons who were objects of compassion, that their enumeration occupies a large volume, which was published by John Novaris, under the title of *Treatise de Privilegiis Miserabilium Personarum*, "by whom were understood," he says, "widows and orphans, sick persons and infirm, such as had suffered any reverse of fortune, the poor generally, captives, prisoners, foreigners, exposed children, penitents, old men and maidens, peasants, and that, too, although they had become miserable through their own fault." All persons included in this category were entitled to have their causes first brought on: a conclusion of the parliament or council of the university was null, if it turned to their prejudice: a general or special retraction could not include legacies made to them: in their favour, men could be obliged to sell their property: an extrajudicial confession was received in evidence for them: in the course of judicial proceedings, they enjoyed a great number of special privileges: an intention, orally expressed, was proof in their favour: they were exempted from penalty in the event of alleging false witnesses: from a sentence in their favour, there was no appeal: a cession made to them was not to be presumed pretended: a legacy to them, though uncertain, was to be sustained: it was to be presumed as made with a view to their misery: it was to be widely interpreted: any one could stipulate in their favour in their absence: doubtful donations were to be understood in their favour: doubtful points of law were to be determined in their favour: a woman could be their advocate in court: they could not be expelled from a hired house, if, at the expiration of the term, they chose to pay as much as others offered. Regularly,

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. iv. + Gen. xvi.

† Thegani de *Gestis Ludovic.* 3.

* Ex. cap. ab. Imperat. 23. Quest. 2. cap. Regum, 23, q. 5. Carleval. in *Tract. de Judiciis* vii. 528.

a lord, for his own use, in case of necessity might eject a tenant; but if the house were rented by one included in the category of the miserable, he had not the power to drive him out; for the poor, in that respect, had the privilege of scholars, who could not be ejected by the proprietors of their lodgings, the law being pleased to consider them as among the miserable. The *Falcidia* were not to be charged on legacies made to any of these persons: the fabric of St. Peter waved its right when the testament was in their favour: a bishop in their cause could appear before his vicar, and seek justice: their causes could be heard, notwithstanding festivals: where sentences were equally divided, that which was in their favour was preferred: the onus of proof was on those against them; so that when prosecutors, though they should fail in evidence, it remained for the opposite party to prove their innocence: their houses were not to be demolished, although coining had been practised in them: a judge could proceed, *ex officio*, in their favour: they could appeal at once to superiors, without mediators: they had the benefit of whole restitution: things inalienable, could be alienated in their favour: their administrators could be compelled to give account during their power: legacies in their favour, though cancelled in the will, took effect, unless the real intention of the testator could be proved; commutations could be made in their favour: they were entitled to support during a process: equity, in their favour, was to be preferred to the rigour of written law: in their causes, if laws differed from the canons, the latter were to prevail: bishops, at their own cost, were to protect them, and clerks were bound to undertake their defence: bishops and clerks could be their guardians, and could negotiate for them: monks could be compelled to plead their cause: they could claim their prerogatives after renouncing them: their causes could be heard in the ecclesiastical courts: they could not be ejected from their houses, though it might be necessary for the landlord to take possession of them: a mandate in their favour did not expire at the death of those who made it: magistrates were to have regard to what was useful to them: on the loss of an instrument, witnesses were not to be required respecting its tenor in their favour: the right of sepulture of an extinct family could revert to them: there could be no rejection of witnesses in their favour: a judge could interrogate in their interests after the cause was concluded: they were

not subject to fine for contumacy: they could be heard alleging suspicions against public officers, without making a deposit: they enjoyed all the privileges of a pious cause, under similar circumstances: legacies and donations to them were not subject to the ordinances of the civil law: a contract in their favour was not dissolved on failure of the final cause: an error of calculation in their favour, in a judicial sentence, was confirmed: a surety was accepted for them that would not have been for others: advocates, vassals, could plead for them, against their own lords: the testament of an excommunicated person, in their favour, could not be set aside.* *Novario* gives a multitude of authorities, in proof of each of these privileges, and cites facts to show their observance. Violence and injustice would, of course, frequently oppose it; but, in all such instances, and whenever the secular power was actuated by a different spirit, the exertions of the clergy, in favour of the miserable, can never be sufficiently admired. To the bishop, say ancient writers, all should fly who suffer injury. In his house there should not be, as in the house of Jove, according to the poet, whom *Themistius* reproves, two vessels, one containing good, the other adverse lots, but no acerbity should be found there, nor any source besides a fountain of mercy and benignity; and therefore St. Bernard calls ecclesiastical superiors mothers.† "Truly," saith he, writing to Pope Innocent, "amongst the privileges of your singular primacy, what, above all, ennobles in our eyes your apostolic power is, when you rescue the poor from the hand of the strong. In my judgment, there is no more precious jewel in your crown, than that zeal with which you are accustomed to relieve the oppressed, and to deliver the just from the rod of sinners."‡

What an admirable spectacle is furnished by Honorable III. endeavouring to instil into the breasts of kings his own gentleness and longanimity, exhorting the king of England ut *subjectos suos studeret regere in spiritu lenitatis*, and the king of Bohemia, sicut regem decet, *mansuetum habere animum et clementem*!§ What a sublime spectacle to behold the successors of the fisherman giving up whole kingdoms, rather than fail in justice to one friendless woman, and, from age to age, rejecting the offers

* *Jo. Novarii Lucani Tract. de Privileg. Miserrab. Person.* † *Cresolii Anth. Sacra.*

‡ *Epist. cxcviii.*

§ *Regest. Honor. III. ix. 16. 25.*

of powerful oppressors, with that hereditary voice of their seat, *Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem*. "O voice of thunder!" cries St. Bernard, "O voice of magnificence and virtue! at whose terror are turned back and confounded all who hate Sion." The conduct of the Roman pontiffs, alone in this respect, would be sufficient to entitle them to the eternal gratitude of mankind; but as it would be wholly impossible to do justice to it without occupying an entire volume, I shall merely allude to what was done by holy men in lower office, who meekly followed in their steps. The letters of St. Bernard to Thibaud, count of Champagne, respecting his conduct to Humbert, will convey an idea of the nature of this action in general. To this prince he writes as follows:—"I have heard that you were anxious, on occasion of our sickness, and I am not a little grateful; and in this I recognise your love for God; for how otherwise should you have condescended so much as to know such a person as myself, unless on account of God? Therefore, since it is certain that you love God, and me for his sake, I wonder that I should be repulsed by you in one little petition, which I think is neither unjust nor unreasonable. If I had sought gold or silver, or anything of that nature, truly I question not I should have received it. Sought, do I say? Nay, without seeking, I have often experienced your bounty. But why have I not deserved to succeed in this one cause, which I have asked not for my sake, but for the sake of God; not so much for me as for you from yourself? What! do you count it unworthy in me to ask, or in you to grant, mercy to a Christian accused before you, and acquitted, though not in your court? Do you not remember him who threatens, *cum accepero tempus ego justitias judicabo*? And if we will judge justice, how much more injuries? Or do you not fear what is written. "*Quia in qua mensura mensi fueritis, remittetur vobis*? Are you not aware that, as easily as you can deprive Humbert of his inheritance, God can strip you of yours? Yea, incomparably more easily. Truly, in cases where the guilt is clear and inexcusable; so that there is no room for mercy, without endangering justice, you ought to be a vindicator, trembling, and grieving, more compelled by the necessity of office, than by the desire of vindicating; but where the alleged crime is either less certain, or more excusable, you should rejoice in finding an occasion where you can exercise

piety, saving justice. Lo, I admonish you this second time, that as you wish God may have mercy on you, so should you show mercy to Humbert, whether you be moved by that sweet promise, '*Beati misericordes, quoniam ipsi misericordiam consequentur*;' or intimidated by that denunciation, '*Judicium sine misericordia illi, qui non fecerit misericordiam*.' Farewell."* Again, he writes to him on the same subject, and says, "I fear to be troublesome to you by these repeated solicitations; but what can I do? If I fear to offend you by writing often, how much more should I fear to offend God by not interposing for the miserable? I return you thanks for allowing me to find favour in your sight, and for permitting Humbert to refute the accusation against him, but I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment at your not having fulfilled your intention of restoring the inheritance to his wife and children, and at your pious word not having been accomplished. If we detect any light or false word in other princes, we count it a thing neither new nor strange; but from Count Thibaud, whose simple affirmation is the same as an oath, and from whom the least lie would be a grievous perjury, we cannot patiently hear yes and no. Amongst many virtues which ennoble your dignity, and render your name illustrious and celebrated through the world, what is chiefly praised, is your constancy of truth. Who, therefore, hath tried by entreaty or advice to enervate the strength of your firm bosom? Who, I say, hath attempted to annul, by fraud, so holy a resolution, so excellent, so worthy of all princes' imitation? Deceitfully, not truly, did he love you; traitorously, and not faithfully, did he advise you, endeavouring to cover, with clouds, your glorious renown for truth, and to render void the word which your mouth uttered,—word agreeable to God's worthy of you, piously just, and justly pious, by I know not what malice, seeking to injure the poor. I beseech you, by the mercy of God, to beware, lest the impious should grow proud, while the poor are prostrated; and keep the promise which you made first to the Lord Norbert, and afterwards to us, that you would restore the inheritance of Humbert to his wife and children."† In a third letter, St. Bernard exhorts the count to be ready always with more clemency and indulgence, to hear the supplications of the poor people. "Lately,

* St. Bernard, Epist. xxxvii.

† Epist. xxxviii.

passing by Barrus, I met," he says, "a woman sufficiently wretched; for her soul was in bitterness, and my bowels were moved at her sorrows, and she implored me to intercede for her. She is the wife of your man Bellinus; to whom, according to the crimes that he committed, you have already rendered many and grievous things. Show her mercy, that God may have mercy on you: at all events, let not her and the innocent children suffer for the iniquity of the father. It is just, that whatever has been taken from them should be restored."* We find him afterwards writing to Gaufrid, bishop of Chartres, to entreat that he would intercede with Count Thibaud for Humbert, as all his own efforts to serve him had proved ineffectual.† Another letter, which he addresses to the bishop of Soissons, concludes with a beautiful exhortation to labour in the cause of mercy:—"I seek suppliantly, I seek earnestly, I seek in season, and out of season, not what would be unworthy of you to grant, or what I might repent having received; for if you will deliver a poor from a powerful man, you will confer on us a great benefit, and still a greater on yourself."‡ The monk of Monte Cassino says of Pope Leo, that he repaired to Amalphi, in order to persuade the Normans to refrain from cruelty, and to cease from molesting the poor; showing them how God is persecuted when the poor are persecuted, and how God is pleased, when good is done to the poor.§ The only question which Guy de Roze, archbishop of Sens, notices, as essential for confessors to address to such as hold the office of seigneurs, is this, "whether they extort money from poor persons?"|| an evil which some governments, in the middle ages, had effectually obviated; for we find, that at Nola, in the sixteenth century, the poor did not pay the same tax for the same objects as the rich, but that each family paid according to its means.¶ Behold, now, an example in later times, of the action of these apostolic men, whose soul-subduing tongue was as a lance to quell the mailed crest of wrong. During the period when Charles Drosius exercised a most cruel tyranny over the inhabitants of Monte Reale, which was then in possession of the French, Friar John, Baptist of Florence, who was residing in the convent of Capuchins, on the

mount, went boldly to remonstrate with him, and threatened him with the divine vengeance if he persisted to oppress the people; but as this governor, who feared neither God nor man, persevered in his atrocious course of cruelty, the holy preacher proceeded to denounce from the pulpit his merciless acts; and when the tyrant heard of what he had said, he sent to inform him, that unless he publicly recanted those words, he would order his beard to be torn from his chin; to whom the holy man sent answer, that when his duty was concerned, he valued his life no more than the hairs of his beard, but that if he would attend at his sermon on the morrow, he should have the satisfaction which he knew would be agreeable to God. Accordingly, on the next day, Charles, surrounded by his armed soldiers, entered the Church. That man of iron soul sat in constrained silence, prepared not so much to hear the word of God, as to command a horrible crime; while his guards stood ready to watch the sign, and execute it. But, lo! the preacher had no sooner lifted up the crucifix, and uttered a short prayer, invoking the Saviour's protection, and proclaiming his resolution never to cease, but with life, to raise his voice in behalf of the poor and oppressed, than terror seized the ruthless enemy; the image of Christ seemed to frown upon him; he shuddered, and, though the friar then proceeded to declare, that the vengeance of heaven was hanging over his head, unless he made restitution to the poor, and ceased to oppress them, he had only sufficient strength to rise and wave to his satellites to follow him, leaving the multitude wrapt in admiration at the sudden and terrific spectacle of a tyrants' remorse.* From this striking example, reader, you can estimate the effects of that monastic action, which was never suspended during the middle ages. Nor can we omit to notice those remarkable fraternities which were instituted by noble men and laics, with a view to afford protection to the weak, and to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. Without entering upon the ground of old Romance, where these are seen to play so memorable a part, we meet with them repeatedly in the annals of history. Historians are not wanting to perpetuate the names of Catellanus Malavolta, Loderengus Andalous, Gruainons Caccianimicus, Hugolinus Lambertinus, of Bologna, Selanca Liazanus, of Reggio, and Rainerius Adelardus, of Modena, who, in the thirteenth century, founded the brother-

* Epist. xxxix.

+ Epist. lvi.

† Epist. ccxxvii.

§ L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. iii. c. 16.

|| Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

¶ Amb. Leo de Nola, Lib. iii. 8. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

* Annales Capucinatorum, an. 1540.

hood of the knights of St. Mary, sanctioned by Pope Urban IV.; of which the insignia showed a purple cross on a white field, beneath two stars; and by the laws of which every member was bound to defend

widows and orphans, and to promote peace as far as was in his power.* This path presents new objects of beauty and grandeur at every step, but we must press forwards hastily.

CHAPTER V.



HE humanity and mercy with which the wars of the middle ages were conducted, would undoubtedly form another class of historical illustrations, on which we might be expected to dwell, if there were not so many topics, still more intimately connected with our argument, remaining as yet unnoticed, the length of which admonishes us to turn our steps from ground that has been frequently explored; and there is no want of guides when we pass near battle fields, and enter within the confines of mere secular history. The facts here also are well known, and generally uncontroverted. A modern author indeed affirms, that it is a gross abuse of language to call a warrior merciful; but in the very work in which the sentence occurs, one may remark that he is obliged to record instances of the most tender compassion exercised in war; and though a hatred of war was undoubtedly characteristic of innumerable heroes, who were celebrated in the middle ages, the same men were able to demonstrate in their deeds, that mercy, in the most sovereign degree, may distinguish those who are constrained, by the circumstances of the times, to engage in it. The proposition, therefore, as general, cannot be admitted, with such facts before us as are attested by history.

Horrors and cruelty have at all times attended the collision of hostile armies; but certainly that reckless sacrifice of human life in furtherance of an important object, that cool calculation of consequences in consigning to destruction friends or enemies, of which so many instances can be produced from the annals of modern warfare, did not belong to the military character of the period in question. On the contrary, the ancient annals record numerous examples of commanders being willing to forego great advantages, rather than fail in mercy towards

those opposed to them, of which one very memorable instance occurred, during the siege of Rheims by the English, when the Castle of Cormicy, defended by Henri de Noir, and a troop of archers from that city, was besieged by Bartholomew de Brunes, an English nobleman. A mine having been secretly made by the English pioneers, their commander, being sure of its effect, sent a summons to Henry to surrender. This brave knight, being ignorant of the danger, was amused at the proposition. "We are well provided," said he, "with all things, and you desire us to surrender; it shall never be so." The English commander, who could not endure to destroy these brave men, invited him to come out under a safe conduct, that he might judge of the peril with his own eyes. His resolution was changed when he beheld the tower undermined, and the walls only supported by beams of timber, which had been placed to prop them up. He surrendered, and was no sooner come out with all his troops, than the fire was set to the props, and the tower shortly opened into two parts, and fell to the ground. This conduct of the English knight was the more noble, as the citizens of Rheims, during the war, had shown the greatest animosity against the English.

When Duke Robert, and Richard, Prince of Capua, besieged Salerno, which the ferocious Prince Gisolfé defended, the sufferings of the inhabitants, through hunger and misery, are described by the monk of Monte Cassino as resembling those experienced, during the siege of Jerusalem, by the Romans. The interests of humanity required that an end should be put to the horrible despotism of Gisolfé, by winning the town, so that these sufferings were unavoidable; but the Norman Prince, nevertheless, found occasion to evince mercy to

* Sigonii de Episcop. Bonov. Lib. i.

vast numbers while persevering in their laudable enterprise. Two young men on this occasion, followed by a dog, contrived to escape from the city, and came to where the duke was, and begged bread for God's sake, which was given to them, and the boys gave a third part of it to their dog; and the dog that evening ran back to the city, carrying the bread to their father's house, and placed it at his feet, and then returned to the lads. And the next day they had bread enough, and gave more to the dog, though they knew not what he had done with it before; and the next evening, again, the dog carried it to their father, and the third day likewise; and the father believing that some Christian sent him this bread for the love of God, tied a card round the dog's neck, on which he wrote, "I thank God for him who has given me these alms, and I cease not to pray to God for him." With this the dog returned, and when the boys had read the card, they carried the dog, having it still hanging from his neck, to the Duchess; but she would not believe their report. However, she caused a little sack of bread to be fastened to the dog; and the dog seemed to be afraid of the people, as if he expected to be accused before the Prince; but, after sunset, as usual, he set off, and carried the bread to the city; and on his return another card was found, on which was written, "Greater thanks I render thee for these greater alms." At length the Prince heard of this circumstance: by his orders the dog was slain, and his master cast into prison, and put to a cruel death.* Towards the conclusion of the siege the Duke gave a memorable example of the mercy, which was spoken of above, which the historian, after describing the enfeebled state of the garrison, proceeds to relate in these terms:—"The duke saw that he could take the city by force; but fearing to cause the death of the inhabitants, and lest the poor people should lose their houses, he would not do so, though he desired above all things to put an end to the misery within the city, which was soon afterwards delivered to him by means of a citizen."†

Every one has heard of the bell which used to be sounded by the Florentines, in the middle ages, during a whole month before entering upon a campaign, in order to give warning to their enemies, that they

might be prepared for what was coming. Machiavelli confesses, in his History of Florence, that such acts attest the prevalence of great generosity and virtue. The text of the *Coutume de Beauvaisis*, written towards the end of the thirteenth century, relative to the formalities which were to be observed before commencing private wars, furnishes another instance of the same spirit: "Qui autrui vient mettre en guerre par paroles, il ne les doit pas dire doubles ne couvertes, mais si clers et si apertes que chil a qui les paroles sont dites ou envoiées sache que il convient, que il se gart. Et qui autrement le feroit se seroit traison."*

Who has not heard also of the extraordinary scenes presented even on the field of battle, when both armies have spared their enemies, and that avowedly from a motive of compassion, and through a horror of shedding blood? In the celebrated battle of Brønneville, in the twelfth century, Orderic Vitalis says, that there were but three men killed.† Some scruple always remained after "destroying the creature of God, whom they could not resuscitate." A modern historian observes, that the type of a King of France was a saint;‡ that is, a man piteous and holy, who would say, with the Emperor Louis the Pious, "I do not wish that any one, on account of me, should lose life or member."§ The Monk of Monte Cassino, describing the victory of the Normans over the Longobards, who, trusting in their superior numbers, had threatened not to leave one of them alive, after relating that the rout and confusion of the enemy was complete, adds, "The Norman conquerors showed such mercy in this battle, that although the enemies' camp contained 2,500 foot soldiers, they would not touch one of them."|| The historians of the middle age have been accused of inhumanity, and indifference to the fate of the common soldiers, because they seldom enter into any details respecting their fate; but surely a charge of this kind, upon such grounds, is most unreasonable and ridiculous. How could these chroniclers have discovered a different method of describing wars from what have been followed by all writers preceding them? In this instance it was necessity, and not inhumanity, which

* Beaumanoir, *Coutume Beauvaisis*, c. 59. p. 30. † Hist. Norm. Lib. xii.

‡ Michelet, *Introduit. à l'Hist. Univ.*

§ Thegan de *Gestis Ludov.* 42.

|| L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. i. c. 32.

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. viii. c. 19.

† Ibid. liv. viii.

made them follow in the steps of Homer, who never speaks of the common crowd, but only brings the chiefs upon the scene. Then, again, what an admirable spirit of mercy distinguished conquerors! It entered into the definition of a great captain in the middle ages to notice his propensity to mercy; as when the old historian of Normandy says of Duke Richard, "*La miséricorde de l'oduc estoit moult grande.*"* And the author of the Chronicle of Robert Guiscard records of him, "*Lo conte avoit en soi toute pitié et miséricorde.*"†

St. Epiphanius relates, that the bishop of Paris was sent as ambassador from Italy to Gundobad, King of Burgundy, for the purpose of redeeming prisoners, and that he spoke with such moving eloquence, that the conqueror restored them all to liberty without ransom.‡

What a contrast was here to the heroes of the civilized nations of antiquity, with whom it was the custom to brand their prisoners of war with a hot iron. The Athenians marked their Samian prisoners with the figure of a ship, and the Samians marked their Athenian prisoners with that of an owl.§

The impious Emperor Frederick II. indeed, when he ravaged Italy in 1238, committed such slaughter, that, as he said himself, the provinces were not vast enough to furnish graves for those whom the fury of his soldiers sacrificed to his vengeance against Gregory IX., revived this custom of heathen warfare; for he made the sign of a cross with a hot iron on the foreheads of all his prisoners. But such an act was only in accordance with the character of an infidel, who led troops of Sarassins and heretics against the church. Prisoners of war in our chivalrous ages could never furnish themes for tragic song, as in times of heroic antiquity.

King Don Alonso of Portugal having been taken prisoner in a battle by Don Fernando, King of Leon, was treated with such humanity by him, besides being restored to liberty as soon as his wounds were healed, that on his return, through gratitude, he would gladly have resigned his kingdom into his hands; but Don Fernando contented himself with the restoration of some places which had been taken in Galicia: and the duke of Milan having taken prisoners the kings of Arragon

and Navarre, gave them their liberty, without ransom or conditions, in order to gain their friendship.* The defeated are twice vanquished; for they are forced to yield the palm even of generosity: the Lady of Brescia, in whose house Bayart had been lodged on the capture of that city, on the departure of that knight from her house, wept with her daughters, as if they were to be put to death. Her last words to him were these: "Flower of chivalry, may the blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ who suffered death and passion for all sinners, reward you in this world and in the next!" When he accepted her present of 500 ducats, lest he should disoblige her, it was only to distribute them immediately among the poor nuns of the convents, which had been injured in the sack of the city. The gentleness and mercy of Louis XII. towards the vanquished cities of Italy, has been ascribed to the influence of his confessor the Dominican John Clerée; and it should be remarked, that there were few conquerors in those times who had not heard lessons of mercy and moderation from the lips of some holy friar. After the second revolt, when Genoa surrendered at discretion, Lewis XII. flushed with victory, entered the city in triumph, holding a drawn sword in his hand; but having embroidered on his coat of arms a king of the bees at the head of his swarm, and for motto these noble words, "Our king has no sting."†

During the twenty-two years in which Garsias de Loaysa, the Dominican bishop of Osma, enjoyed the favour of the Emperor Charles V. whose confessor he became in 1524, he made it his constant effort to inspire him with sentiments of goodness for his subjects, moderation and mercy towards the enemies whom he vanquished. After the battle of Pavia, when Francis I. was conducted prisoner to Madrid, Charles assembled his council to determine how he ought to treat his royal captive. It was the bishop's part, as chief of the council of conscience, to speak first; and though he well knew the interested views of those who would speak after him, which appeared in fact when the Chancellor Gattinara, and the Duke of Alba urged that he should be imprisoned for life, and the ambitious projects of the young emperor, who aspired to universal monarchy, and who would be

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. v. c. 4.

† Chronique de Robert Viscart, liv. i.

‡ Ap. Cresolii Anth. Sac.

§ *Ælian Var. Hist. Lib. xi. c. 9.*

* Savedra Christ. Prince, ii. 424.

† Tournon, *Hist. des. Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. liv. 24.*

now told that the only way of resisting the Turks would be by reducing Christendom under one monarch, for such was in reality the motive these counsellors assigned for their advice, nevertheless he gave his opinion, and persisted in justifying it, notwithstanding the cold and unmoved countenance with which the emperor heard him, that the King of France should be instantly set at liberty without ransom, and even without being obliged to agree to any conditions.* Even the rights with which the feudal system invested the clergy turned all to the profit of the unfortunate, and both in time of peace and of war were exercised in the cause of mercy.

Charles of Anjou, after his victory over Conradin at Tagliacozzo, was obliged to give Henri of Castille his life, because the Abbot of Monte Cassino, who had procured his arrest, would not render him excepting on that condition.

But I cannot remain here to multiply examples, which besides must present themselves in abundance to the memory of every reader of Froissart, or of our other ancient chroniclers. There is, however, one fact connected with the history of wars in general, which cannot be passed over in silence; for it is impossible not to be struck at the evidence which is presented in proof, that the humanity and compassion which formed the chivalrous character in the middle ages, was the result of the principles of the Catholic religion, emanating from the church, and diffused through society by the institutions which it inspired. Without recurring to the history of warfare in Pagan times, we need only cast a glance at the two parties, which were opposed to each other at first in the east, and subsequently in the north, to feel the whole force of this observation. Saladin, we are told by modern writers, was of a noble and generous nature; but what mercy did he show towards the vanquished?

After the terrible battle near the lake of Tiberias, in which he defeated the crusaders, when Guy de Lusignan was made prisoner, the captive king was accommodated with a tent by order of Saladin. Having been given some wine that had been cooled in snow, the unfortunate Lusignan presented the cup to the Lord of Carac; but Saladin held back his hand, exclaiming that a traitor like him should

not drink in his presence. The menaces with which these words were followed, enraged Renaud; and he manifested his contempt for them as if he had been still at liberty, and in his own good castle. Then Saladin struck his unarmed and defenceless prisoner with his sword, and suffered his guards to slay him before his face. The following day, a scene of greater horror took place. The conqueror, seated on a throne, and surrounded by Emirs, and the most learned men of his court, summoned before him the Hospitallers and Templars, and, as a particular honour, gave his counsellors the privilege of each killing a captive with his own hands.

If we turn to the north, after the departure of Catholicism, and consider the spirit with which hostilities were conducted between states professing Christianity, we shall find that the epoch of the change of religion in the sixteenth century, was distinguished also as forming the commencement of a new military æra utterly unlike all that had preceded it. The religious wars against the Catholics in Germany, Holland, and France, were characterized by a ferocity to which no parallel can be found in the annals of the world. All the atrocities recorded of the heathen hostilities, and all the prodigious cruelties that can be ascribed by the imagination to the hordes of savages, were surpassed by our militant reformers. It was a new voice to these regions of the earth, when the men whom Luther styled the prophets of murder, raised the cry which found such fearful echoes in the breasts of an infuriated population, On, on, on! Be without pity, when Esau shall give you good words. Hear not the groans of the impious; they will supplicate you very tenderly; they will weep like children. Be not touched; slay, and let not the sword dyed in blood have time to cool.

Hence it was, that the horrors perpetrated in Rome, when sacked by the Lutheran and mercenary troops of the Emperor, exceeded all that had ever been suffered by that city on the eight different occasions when she fell into the hands of an enemy. Mercy indeed was not much to be expected from a leader such as George de Frundsberg, chief of the German troops, who had been heard to swear repeatedly that he would strangle the Pope with the gold chain which he wore round his neck, or from troops, some of whom, as the author of the Lutheran history relates, used to boast that they would soon eat a piece of

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord S. D. tom. iv. liv. 26.

his flesh. Even against each other the Reformers contended with unsparing rage. On the revolt of the peasants in Germany, Luther charged the Elector Frederick and Duke John, to show them no mercy. The peasants, he said, deserved no tolerance, but the indignation of God and men: "they are under the ban, and they may be treated as mad dogs." Those who combatted under the ancient standard, needed no instruction to convince them that cruelty could not be combined with piety, and that the paternosters of the constable Anne de Montmorency was execrable. The writers of the middle age were all well assured that David, in speaking of overthrowing enemies, meant the victory over sins; and that, as Paschal remarks, both Moses and Isaiah had used the term in the same sense; therefore, in no manual of warriors, in no chivalrous romance, in no book of any description, of the middle ages, will you discover the slightest trace of the spirit of the reformed

captains, who made such strange and fearful use of the ancient Testament. But even without referring to wars professedly religious, it is certain that, wherever the Catholic code had ceased to influence men in military authority, there was never ground for astonishment, on finding the fairest laurels stained by some opprobrious note, of having failed in mercy, if not through blind caprice, at least through an inflexible adherence to some false idea of justice, national honour, or general expediency.

But is it useless to incur odium by pulling down vain trophies, which must one day fall of themselves, if the minds which now cling to them should ever be taught to appreciate true glory. Here let us stop. The path is slippery, and can lead to nothing worthy: all blessed things visibly droop and wither, as we advance on it; it is enough to have marked the limits; let us sign our breasts and return.

CHAPTER VI.

IN TOLERANCE, that so ill agrees with mercy, has been ascribed by the common voice of modern schools to the Catholic society of the middle ages. It will be necessary, therefore, to examine upon what grounds that accusation rests; and for this purpose there is nothing more urgent, in the first instance, than to form a clear idea of the sense in which the word is used by those who bring it forward; for if they understand it as implying that the men of those times believed one religion to be true, and but one,—believed that it was the duty of those who adhered to that faith to endeavour by all means consistent with free will, to convert men to it, and to incorporate all of human kind into the one body which professed it,—the charge is true. But if they intended to signify that the believing men of yore deemed it reasonable and just to use force in purging the world from errors, so as to compel all

waverers to believe, and hold fast the Catholic faith, and to punish them with the temporal sword if they did not believe and hold it fast, the accusation involves an absurdity, as well as an historical falsification, and can only convict those who support it of having formed an erroneous and distorted view of the character of past times.

On the first of these suppositions, therefore, the truth of the charge being admitted, if we proceed to inquire what inference it will justify, respecting the mercy of men in the ages of faith, setting passion and prejudice aside, we shall find that it will warrant no other conclusion, but that they were strictly and in genuine simplicity Christian times, and precisely in part because that charge is true. The Christian religion was not a system of eclectic philosophy; it was a deposit, once delivered authoritatively from heaven, and to be transmitted afterwards by divinely commissioned men, without addition, diminution, or change whatever, to the end of

time. It rested wholly on the doctrine clearly and repeatedly announced by its Divine Founder, that all those men who did not believe and receive it would perish. It was the sole way of deliverance vouchsafed to the human race. How then could men who really had faith, arrive at the contrary conclusion, that it was a point to be determined by individual inquiry, a subject for progressive development, that all men had an equal claim to the title of its disciples, whether they persevered or not in the doctrine of its authorised teachers, and however widely they might be separated from them, that it was capable of being divided into many religions, all differing from each other, both in principles of belief and practice, in doctrine as well as discipline, and that the virtue of tolerance, equivalent with charity and mercy, required them to give countenance and support to those who acted in accordance with such views? Evidently this was what men who had faith could never do. They might renounce their faith, they might approach the Christian religion as the ancient philosophers approached the school of some famous teacher of wisdom, and say, we approve of such and such parts, and we must reject such other parts, by this very act of choice and selection, according to the concurrent voice of all the first ages, proclaiming themselves to be no longer implicit followers of the apostolic instruction, and consequently no longer persons belonging to the Church instituted by Christ the Saviour, but never, while persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, could they mistake such toleration, full of cruelty, for the charity of the gospel. "*Ista caritas,*" says St. Bernard, "*destruit caritatem; hæc discretio discretionem confundit.*"*

It is an error to suppose that discretion of this kind is the result of any progress of philosophy in modern times. St. Augustin says, that the devil, on seeing the temples of the demons become deserted, moved the heretics, who, under the name of Christians, should resist the Christian doctrine, as if they could indifferently, without any correction, be contained in the city of God, in like manner, as the city of confusion had indifferently contained philosophers, entertaining amongst themselves different and adverse opinions; "therefore," adds St. Augustin, "if any persons in the Church of Christ should

teach any thing morbid or bad, and should contumaciously refuse to amend their dogmas, and should persist in defending them, they become heretics, and must be driven out into the ranks of the enemy."* Christian antiquity had but one voice to assent to this doctrine. Clearly, however, as Bossuet remarks, "what rendered the Church so odious to those who protested against the ancient faith was, more than any thing else, this holy and inflexible incompatibility with error; it was because it wished to be alone—because it believed itself the spouse, title which admits of no partition. This was, in fact, what rendered it so severe, so unsociable, and so odious to the separated sects, which at first asked for nothing else but that she would not strike them with her anathemas; but her holy severity and inflexibility, which caused her to be hated by schismatics, rendered her dear and venerable to the children of God."†

Moreover, another source of terror and jealousy to all excluded persons is the discovery that the Catholic religion must always seek to proselytize, and in this they only discern with accuracy what is its real character; for the spirit of the Church is essentially conquering to conquer. Like him, of whom it is said, every man's hand was against him, and his hand against every man; so it is not to make peace that it hath been established on earth, but rather that it should produce hostility, as its Divine Founder predicted;—a war, too, it must be confessed, in which all the advantages are against its adversaries; for there is a power invisible, sooner or later sent forth to strike down every lofty thing that rises against it, and to bring into its subjection even the thoughts and imaginations of the human heart—war—to the conflict of man with man, of master with his own household, of sons with their own father—war to the knife's point, as it were, according to the image of that Spanish theologian who entitles his great work in proof of religion, "*The dagger of Faith*"—war never-ending, constantly in action, as long as the human race exists upon the earth, and always on the same unequal terms; those who are ranged under the banner of Catholicism having at their exclusive disposal a prodigious power, an instrument of inconceivable, divine perfection, the secret of which no genius or indefatigable

* Apolog. ad Guil. 8.

* De Civitate Dei, liv. xviii. 51.

† Hist. de Variat. VI. avert.

malice of their adversaries can ever discover. Do you ask what this may be? It is taken from the altar; it is a consecrated weapon; its form is now antiquated, and will only cause a smile to those who have not felt its power; for the Church vanquishes by repeating the combat of her protomartyr Stephen, who had charity for arms, and by that conquered all things.

Already here is more than sufficient to explain the cry of intolerance which assails us on all sides whenever the Catholic religion is named; and yet, so clear and irresistible was the truth on which these views were founded, that all these societies, which separated themselves into distinct communions, agreed in admitting it; for they only differed from the Catholic church in affirming that they were the members who truly constituted that one mystical body; but never did any of them practically adopt the conclusion that all formed integral parts of it, and that it was therefore immaterial, or a matter not of essential concern to what side men joined themselves; of which fact the proof may be seen at any time in their confessions of faith and symbolical books, all of which maintain what is termed the doctrine of exclusive salvation; though modern orators and authors, with incredible levity and inconsideration, persist in ascribing it as a distinctive feature to the faith of the Catholic church. Such being, then, the conviction of Catholics, it was clearly the very dictate of mercy, in its most purified and exalted sense, which led them to the conclusion that it was their imperative duty, both as members of this divine society and as men, to endeavour to recall back to it all persons who had been induced to forsake it, as well as to impart its advantages to all who were afar off, even to the universal race of men. Had they been wanting in respect to this sentiment, they would be the proper objects for the abhorrence of all subsequent generations who admitted the truth of the Christian religion. They would have left an eternal fame, to prove how far it was possible for the human intelligence to fall from the grace of mercy, and to lose every benign feature of its Maker's image. But in this respect the men of the middle ages were not wanting; and the proofs of the fact, which can be derived from ancient sources, ought to form to a philosophic mind, that loveth love and mercy, one of the most delightful fruits of historic investigation.

St. Clemens Alexandrinus relates a tra-

dition of the apostle Mathias, that he used to remind every one that if the neighbour of one of the elect had sinned, that elect person had sinned; for if he had acted as he ought, he would have preserved his neighbour from sinning.* Immeasurable, certainly, is the distance between such a doctrine and the sentiment of many schools at present; but the mercy and charity of the middle ages, as witnessed in a St. Benedict or a St. Francis, would have acquiesced in it at once; for it would never have allowed men to feel content with being instructed and holy in their own manners, without endeavouring, though at the risk of incurring personal danger, to admonish, instruct, and reform others over whom they might have authority. "Let no one, brethren," said St. Bernard, "dissemble and flatter sins; let no one say, Am I my brother's guardian? Let no one be indifferent when he sees decay of discipline; for to be silent when you can admonish, is to consent to sin; and we know that they who commit sin, and they who consent to it, will be punished alike."†

But, in remarking that the men of faith knew it to be their duty to use all means for this purpose, I added, "consistent with the free-will of the persons whom they wished to convert;" and this leads us to the second stage of the inquiry which is here instituted.

In making the will of man free, it pleased his Creator to endue him with the power of rejecting or of accepting the favours, whether of a temporal or of a spiritual order, which would be placed before him; and therefore, so far, unquestionably man possesses from nature the right, if it can be so termed, of forfeiting salvation and of denying the truth, which was revealed for his deliverance. Beyond this sad privilege, the word liberty of conscience, as a maxim of genuine Christianity, independent of the power of men to punish, can mean nothing. Has man liberty of conscience from God to hear or to reject the Church? Unquestionably, in submission to the unsearchable mysteries of divine grace, he has that liberty. Has he liberty of conscience from God to hear or to reject the Church, and, in the latter event, to continue still a true member of the Church, and retain all his title to its privileges? With equal certainty we must reply in the negative to this propo-

* Stromat. liv. vii. 13.

† Sermon in Nat. S. Joan. Bapt.

sition. Has he, then, liberty of conscience from the Church—that is, may he refuse to hear and obey her decisions, and continue to be a member of her communion? A negative must again be returned, and with the same assurance of truth and justice. What, then, is the Church to do to prevent him from exercising this privilege, to which he lays claims? Is she to force him to hear her—to compel him to believe? How could such an idea be ever entertained, since the Church has no authority to take away what God has granted? and we have seen that he has granted to man the free power of receiving or rejecting his offers of grace. “Those who are compelled to enter,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “are those who, broken by adversities, are corrected from sins and led back to the love of God.”* Such was the interpretation put upon those words in the middle ages. But upon what shadow of ground can any one question the right of the Church to put in execution the divine decree, and in conformity with the express and absolute commission which she has so solemnly received, to separate from her fold those impure and lifeless members which might spread contagion and death through the ranks of others who continued faithful? As opposed to the general conviction of the existence of this right, we may, with Pelisson, style “liberty of conscience a fatal word, unknown to all Christian antiquity, which nothing but the fury of civil wars, bloody battles, and the overthrow of legitimate authority, have introduced in later times. In astronomy or physics,” continues this philosopher, “it was lawful to follow one’s own opinion; but when was it ever permitted either to do in the republic or to believe in the Church whatever one chose? Such boundless liberty is a chimera or a servitude.”†

The human soul, easily ensnared by the flavour of some slight good, with fondness would pursue destruction, if no guide recall, no rein direct, her wandering course. Hence the wise poet of ages skilled in wisdom, reminds men that it behoves the law should be a curb, the government a mark, whose borrowed light might show at least the fortress and main tower of the true city.

If we proceed now to inquire what were the consequences, during the middle ages, of men exercising this liberty of forsaking the communion of the faithful, the question

acquires a more complex character, inasmuch as there were two distinct powers concerned. In relation to interests of a spiritual order, the measures adopted emanated solely from the religious authority; but the state which at one time sought impunity for its own crimes, and with that view, as in the acts of Henry II. of England, desired to deprive the Church of the liberty of excommunication, which no human power can ever take from it, and which at another deemed the protection of the people from error in matters of faith an object intimately connected with its own interests, was not slow to interfere, on these occasions, and with whatever motive, in a manner equally opposed in most instances to what was recommended and required by the Church. This explains such facts as that presented in the eleventh year of Henry III., when a writ was sent to the Lord Justice of Ireland, commanding him to aid the episcopal excommunications with the secular arm, as in England was used. In human affairs, indeed, the most salutary regulations are often evaded or defied; and as a recent historian of the middle ages remarks, in excusing the practice which then prevailed, power will often decide where these obligations have nothing beyond conscience to enforce them. Hence the fathers of councils were frequently compelled to invoke the secular arm for the execution of their decrees; but by degrees the civil power usurped the spiritual. The *witena-gemot*, being solicited to chastise such as despised the observance of Lent, or such as neglected to baptize their children, soon considered ecclesiastical penalties as much its province as those incurred by a violation of civil law. Thus, by the laws of the Saxon states, if a man neglected to baptize within the first month, he paid a fine of thirty shillings. If the child died after that period, without the regenerating rite, his whole property was forfeited, to be employed for the relief of the poor and other holy works. In fine, there was scarcely a commandment in the decalogue, the violation of which did not fall within the cognizance of the civil tribunals, so blended were they with the ecclesiastical. The civil rulers, it is true, might have appealed to the judgment of the ancient wise, and said in justification of themselves, “He who does not forbid sin when he has the power, enjoins it;” but the legislation in later times, in respect to such offences, enforced by the civil tribunals of France and England, was so far from being in harmony with the spiritual authority, that there are repeated instances of its being denounced

* Hugo St. Vict. Allegor. in Lucam, Lib. iv. c. 20.

† Reflexions sur les Differends de la Religion. Reponse aux Objections, xiv.

by the clergy as opposed to the Christian mildness; and the authorized guides of men could never with impunity take part in the judgment of the secular courts. Dominique de Florence, archbishop of Toulouse, was appointed, in 1419, president of the parliament of Toulouse, on the accession of Charles VII. In that same year, on the 30th of July, the parliament (the archbishop presiding with five clerical and six laical counsellors) sentenced a man to be decapitated for blasphemy. The severity of the Gallican tribunals was well known; but the public was filled with astonishment, that the archbishop and the five clerks should have despised the laws of the Church, by rendering such a sentence. The clergy of Toulouse, both secular and regular, immediately separated themselves from his communion, and declared that, by becoming irregular, he had lost his spiritual jurisdiction. In vain did he attempt to justify himself from the pulpit of his metropolitan church, clad in his pontificals, citing the examples of Moses and of Phineas, and threatening the disobedient with excommunication. The cause was laid before the Pope, who deputed Guillaume de Chalançon, bishop of Pui, to take informations on the spot, and send the result to Rome. The Pope reserved the decision to himself, but granted to an apostolic commissioner the power of absolving the archbishop and the five clerks, *ad cautelam* and in secret, which he exercised, it is said, in November, 1422; when it is supposed the archbishop and clergy were reconciled, the former resigning the office of president into the hands of the Dauphin.* The penalties which the Church inflicted were, undoubtedly, severe and fearful to persons who had faith, but men who had no regard to the words of Jesus Christ could not consistently complain; for according to their principles they must have appeared null and powerless. They consisted either in excommunication, which was a formal exclusion of the individual from the spiritual advantages of the Christian Church, to which he was not restored until after having complied or pledged himself to comply with the conditions required by the canons, or else in simple admonitions and exhortations.

The ancient discipline recognises, a two-fold excommunication, mortal and medicinal; to the former of which belong the horror of solemnities publicly revealing it.† In the interests of peace, the Church was

often obliged to have recourse to both. In the year 992, to restrain military rapine, Alduin, bishop of Limoges, ordained, that divine worship should cease in parish churches and monasteries; which decree he deemed equivalent to an excommunication.* A few years later, several men of arms were excommunicated by name: a solemn curse was pronounced against themselves, their abettors, their arms, their horses; and torches were dashed upon the ground, and extinguished, while the clergy prayed that, in like manner, might their joy perish in the sight of angels, unless they made restitution, and ceased to oppress the poor. The deprivation of funeral rights, the administration of which by rebellious hands is justly deemed by the faithful, a barbarous infliction on the surviving friends, as well as an insult to the dead, when ordained by Catholic authority, was deemed part of the penalty of such one as, in contumacy, died against the holy Church. We find it decreed, at the Synod of Ries, in 1284, that no bier should even be borne before the house of persons excommunicated.† In such a refusal, however, there was no ground for an accusation, unless it be intolerance, to refrain from observing a mere senseless formality, such as would be the funeral rites of the Catholic Church, if celebrated over the bodies of persons who, while alive, had set no value on the privilege of belonging to her communion, or who, perhaps, had died in the commission of the very acts which they knew were equivalent with a wilful rejection of her authority. An example of a general interdict occurs in the twenty-ninth canon, styled "of the Apostles."‡ It never excluded what was necessary for the condition of the sick, and infants. During an interdict, the Franciscans could celebrate solemnly on the festivals of St. Francis, St. Bonaventura, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Louis, St. Bernardine of Sienna, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth, and the martyrs of the order.§ In many convents and hospitals, as in that of St. Thomas, at Caen, and St. John, at Angiers, it was permitted, during an interdict, to celebrate the divine office with closed doors, and without bells in an under-tone, all interdicted persons being excluded.|| Many prelates, as those who held the sees of Canterbury, London, Ely, and Worcester, obtained permission to cele-

* Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 512.

† Id. tom. i. 81.

‡ Cotelier, tom. i. p. 447.

§ Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. iv. tit. xix.

|| Inn. III. Epist. Lib. xi. 61; xiii. 51.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 18.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. iv. tit. 18.

brate mass once every week in their cathedrals.* An instance recorded in an ancient chronicle, will serve to illustrate the order of proceeding in particular cases, when excommunication was inflicted; and the result may lead the most prejudiced to suspect, that it was not the clergy on such occasions who were necessarily the persecutors. "In the diocese of Argentine, in Alsace, there was a town called Barra, inhabited by good men; and there was," continues the ancient chronicler, "a young priest, who served that parish. But there was in the town a man who served his passions, rather than his duty; for it was usual with him, when Advent, or Lent, or any days of fast came in the course of the year, to have no wish to fast, but he would take with him two or three others, and enter a tavern, and there, openly before all the people, eat and drink to intoxication. The priest, observing that he caused others to sin, and that many were scandalized through him, took him aside privately, and remonstrated with him; but he said that he would not fast, because God had made bread and wine, and other victuals, that men might use them as they liked. The priest, after repeated admonitions in private, resolved to summon him in face of the Church, that he might be judged by the parishioners: he came, accordingly, and in face of the Church, repeated the same defence, that God wished men to use his gifts when, and how, and where they might choose. The soldiers, and other prudent men with whom the Church was then filled to an overflow, argued with him as to his daring to utter such vain words in face of the Church. The priest reminded him, that he ought to stand by the decision of the Church; but when he had in vain admonished him thrice, he proceeded to excommunicate him, and obliged him to leave the Church. It happened soon after, that on the vigil of the holy apostles, Simon and Jude, the priest, going to the Church to perform the divine office, was seen by the excommunicated man and his accomplices, who were sitting carousing at the entrance of the tavern cellar. The priest had just entered the cemetery, when they rose up and came upon him; and he that was excommunicated ran him through with a weapon, which one of his comrades gave him for the purpose. The priest lived to receive the body and blood of our Lord, and then rendered his soul to heaven as a true martyr."† In

* Epist. Lib. xi. 214. 217.

† Chronicon Senon. Lib. v. cap. 2. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iii.

the event of mortal excommunication being inflicted, the social position of the sufferer undoubtedly underwent a fearful change; but it should be observed, that the consequence was inevitable, and could not be prevented either by the Church or the state, without doing violence to the express injunction of the holy Scripture, issued not to meet a particular emergency, but to be a general rule for the observance of all Christians to the end of time. The solemn charge of St. Paul, "Hæreticum hominem, post unam et secundam correptionem devita;"* and that precept of blessed John, the apostle of love, "Si quis venit ad vos, et hanc doctrinam non affert, nolite recipere eum in domum, nec ave ei dixeritis,"† could never yield, during ages of faith, to the contrary prescription of any human notions of liberality, however plausible. True, when there was a disposition to disobey them, they were enforced by apostolic mandate, as may be witnessed in the letters of Pope Innocent III. to the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester, and to the archbishop of Thebes;‡ but what else could the Church do? Who denies that, in many instances, the sufferers might have deep claims on the esteem and commiseration of the generous and good? But does not the very fact of the nobleness of their nature render more visible the obligation of the Church to exercise real mercy towards them? Does it not prove that they were, therefore, the men whom she was, in a more particular manner, bound to correct; for how otherwise could they be restored to the peace and love of God?

The Church would do violence to no one, nor compel any one to embrace her doctrine; but she always wished, that her children should be separated from those who propagated errors against faith, lest, as St. Jerome says, "one infected animal should spread infection through the entire fold."§ Her pale was wide, indeed, so that St. Bernard says, "We must go out of the world, if we wish to fly from all the evil whom the Church tolerates."|| There was no danger in receiving any one whom the Church received; but in order that the minds of Catholics might not be perverted, she ordained that men who formally opposed her should be excluded from their society, and not allowed to instil their opinions into unguarded breasts.¶ In the first place, as

* Ad. Philem. + Epist. B. Joan. ii. 1.

† Inn. III. Epist. Lib. xi. 214. xv. 28.

‡ Comment. in Epist. ad Galat. cap. 5. 9.

§ Epist. cccliii.

¶ Joan. Devoti Institut. Canonic. Lib. iv. tit. 6.

Pope Victor III. said of the schismatics of his time, "to believe even that such men could be priests, was altogether to err. Penance and communion should be received from no one but from a Catholic; but if there should be no Catholic priest, it was more fitting to remain without a visible communion, and to communicate invisibly from the Lord's hand, rather than to receive communion from a heretic, and be separated from God; for although, in consequence of surrounding heretics," says Victor, "the Catholics cannot have the sacred communion of Christ visibly and corporally, yet, whilst united in mind and body with Christ, they have the sacred communion of Christ invisibly."* In a word, the maxim of ages of faith, in all such cases, was that of St. Augustine, "Non habemus partem cum iis qui faciunt partem."† But this was not all: for the separation was not confined to the strict limits of religious worship. Clemens, the disciple of Peter, expressly says, "remove impenitent eclectics from the society of the faithful; for these pretenders to wisdom, who affect to be pious, corrupt the flock, and follow a way which, though it may seem right to some, leads in the end to death."‡ By the canons of the council of Epaone, in 517, priests are forbidden to assist at the repasts of obstinate heretics, and the prohibition extended to the laity, who were to keep aloof from the society of all persons who had personally been separated from the Church by a formal sentence. St. Gregory, of Tours, relates an anecdote, which will show the prevailing sentiments of his age in this respect. "Heresy," saith he, "is always hostile to Catholics, and never loses an occasion of laying snares for them. There was a certain woman, a Catholic, who had a husband that was a heretic, to whom, when a Catholic priest used to come, she being very Catholic, used to say to her husband, 'I pray your benevolence, that for the sake of this priest, who is come to visit me, there may be a joyful reception for him in our house, that we may give him a good supper;' when her husband used to consent. Now, on one of these occasions, there happened to arrive a heretic priest, upon which the husband said to his wife, 'Our joy is now double, because priests of both religions are in our house.' So they sat down to meat, and the husband placed his priest on his right hand, and the Catholic priest on

his left; and he said to the heretic priest, 'If you consent to what I propose, we shall play a merry trick on this priest of the Romans, [*exerceamus hodie cachinnum de hoc Romanorum Presbytero.*] and this will consist in your being quick to sign all the dishes as soon as they are placed before us; for by so doing, we shall feast joyously, and he will sit in sadness;' and he answered, 'I will do what you propose.' So, when the first dish was brought, he signed it immediately; and the woman perceiving it, said, 'Do not so, for by this I shall commit an ungrateful injury against my priest;' but the second and third dish arriving in succession, the heretic priest did the same as before, and in like manner with the fourth."* The zeal, the delicate honour, the deep sense of fidelity, which actuated so many men during ages of faith, demanded even more than what the Church required; so that when heresy was permitted to infect a whole country, multitudes of its Catholic inhabitants went into voluntary exile. St. Peter Nolasco, while a youth, having lost his parents, felt such a horror for the heresy of the Albigenses, which then desolated part of France, that he left his country, after dividing his inheritance, and passed into Spain to Montserrat. In like manner, as we observed in a former book, many Catholic nobles and others abandoned these islands on the change of religion, and ended their days in France, Belgium, or Italy. Robert Malusvicinus being about to inhabit an estate in the south of France, which had been infected by the Manichæan heresy, besought Pope Innocent III. that he would order his legate, the abbot of Citeaux, to depute some monk or secular priest, to accompany him, by whose counsel and ministry, in hearing confessions, he and his wife might be directed in the way of salvation, as long as they remained in that country; and we have the reply of the pontiff granting his humble petition.† The faithful regarded the heretics as traitors against the highest King: they deemed no act extravagant which could mark their detestation of such ingratitude; and it is curious to trace, in many ecclesiastical decrees, a disposition to meet this high sentiment even on its own ground of chivalrous sensibility; as when Pope Innocent III. commanded, that the houses in which any Paterans had been received should be demolished to their foundations, and never rebuilt, since they had been the haunts of

* Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. Lib. iii. c. 72.

† C. Schisma, 27.

‡ Apost. Const. vi. 18.

* S. Greg. Turonens. Miracul. Lib. i. c. 80.

† Epist. tom. iii. Lib. xii. 131.

the perfidious :* and as in the decree which prohibited the clergy from accepting their alms or oblations, on pain of suspension, which was to be for ever, unless revoked with the special consent of the apostolic see. Historically considered, the practice of Catholics in the middle ages, in respect to persons excommunicated, was only in strict conformity with the traditionary manners which had come down from the primitive Christians, as may be witnessed in the work of Fleury, who shows how they refrained from eating with them, stopped their ears to the discourse of heretics, fled from their company, or performed penance, in order to be reconciled when they had been joined to it.† St. Athanasius says of St. Anthony, that he never had any commerce with the Meletian schismatics, nor with the Manichæans, nor with any other heretics; for he believed and affirmed, that their friendship and familiarity involved the death of the soul." St. Irenæus, after relating how St. John, the evangelist, fled from Cerinthus, adds, "such fear had the apostles and their disciples to communicate, or even exchange a word with those who adulterated truth."‡

Viewed with the eyes of faith, there was nothing in the spirit or letter of the ecclesiastical discipline opposed to mercy; for where was the intolerance or cruelty in withdrawing in humble silence, in the spirit of peace and self-renouncement, from the ranks of a gay and a scornful opposition to the society of the obedient, meek, and lowly of heart? To have been always conversant in domestic intercourse with religious innovators, or men not yet with faith endued, would have been thought to argue in a Christian, not the tolerance of the blessed merciful, but the assent and duplicity of a selfish parasite: it would have been considered a flagrant violation of the express command of the Gospel, § founded upon the strictest justice, which interfered with the discharge of no social duty, but rather tended to preserve a sense of all social duties, and also upon the result of wise experience, and exact observation of life; "for what doth not custom invert;" as St. Bernard exclaims; "What doth not yeld to use;" Hear the lamentations of the just man: "Quæ prius tangere nolebat anima mea, nunc præ angustia cibi mei sunt. First, it will seem insupportable: in process of time, you will judge it less grievous; soon

after, you will feel it light; again, a little while, and you will not even feel it in any degree: finally, it will delight you. So, by degrees, you contract hardness of heart, and then aversion."* The importance of selecting persons of congenial views, with whom men were to associate, was recognised by the Gentiles. As the youth Lysiteles says in the old play, "The good seek for themselves faith, honour, glory, grace; cum probis potius quam cum improbis vivere vanidiciis."†

The Catholic society of the ages of faith had indeed a more secure conscience, and a very different rule; but in yielding implicit obedience to the evangelic precept, which forbids a promiscuous association, without transgressing any counsel of mercy, it still acted upon the principle of self-defence, as its guides concur in admitting. "Believe me, my son," says the wise man, "do not remain, but fly; the least delay may be fatal to you."‡—"Think not," continues St. Chrysostom, after quoting these words, "that I exhort you to fly because I fear the force of the arguments of the impious: no, I fear only your own weakness. As for us who are founded in the faith, all that they can say appears but so much vain sophistry, easier to destroy than the fragile work of the spider; but I repeat it, I fear your weakness."§ Truly it was well to fear when such examples had been given to the Church, of the fatal effects of neglecting that counsel, after she had seen herself robbed of a Tertullian, a priest, a man of severe understanding, of great learning, illustrious for his victories over Jews and Gentiles, over Apelles, Marcion, Praxeas, and Hermogene, by the conversation of two fanatical dreaming women, Priscilla and Maximilla.

With respect to the middle ages it is an historical fact, that it was by means of artful insinuations, made in the ordinary intercourse of life, that the Manichæans and other heretics of the South of France perverted so many Christians. We can form some idea of their policy by means of the light which has been thrown upon the proceedings of secret societies in later times. "Simplicioribus singula non revelantur," says Reinerus of the Cathari. St. Bernard tells us, that the monster of his age wore the semblance of a just man, so kind and gracious was its outward cheer; the rest was

* Gesta Innocent'i lii. Epist. Lib. x. c. 130.

† Mœurs de Chrétiens.

‡ Cont. Hæres. Lib. iii. 3.

§ Matt. xviii. 17. 1. ad Corinth. v. 11.

* De Consideratione, i. 2.

† Plaut. Trinum. i. 1.

‡ Hom. li.

§ Prov. i. 15.

serpent all. The heretics were truly in sheep's clothing; no men appeared more devout or more moral; nothing could sound better than their words at the commencement; for they imitated the policy of those spoken of in the Gospel, who at first produce good wine; but when men have drunk much, then that which is worse. Pope Innocent III. says, that the Cathari promise with a context of heavenly words, and with the pictured adornment of eloquence, to prepare for their hearers a sound and wholesome couch, on which they may rest with a free heart from the tumult of vices; but that they rather construct a place of perdition, with the cords of sinners.* The danger of debate with such persons may be collected from the disputation published by Martene.† But even where there was no disguise from the beginning, or where the errors were merely such as later times have developed, the danger of associating with men leagued in such a confederacy, was not such as any wise man could despise. Where no disguise was offered, the common troops that waited on all who unfurled their banner against Rome, were only men profane, in whom nature was so transformed, that it seemed as if they had shared of Circe's feeding. Amidst brute swine they shaped first their obscure way; then like those we read of with the poet, sloping onward, they found curs, snarlers, more in spite than power: still journeying down, they found dogs turning into wolves. Descending further through the curst and luckless foss, they met a race of foxes, so replete with craft, that they believed no skill could master it. These introduced them to the erring spirits of a later date; and against such as these, faithful reader, the Church did well to warn thee; nor should she cease, because her words are heard by other ears than thine. At all times men who from deliberate choice oppose Catholicism, are in one respect like the combatants described by Homer, *δευῆς ἀκόρητοι ἀντῆς*; and of each a Catholic would naturally say, "He is too disputable for my company; this babble shall not henceforth trouble me." In colloquial intercourse with them, the end would always be idle recrimination, and the Catholic would have only to defend himself on Jason's ground:

Ἄμυλλαν γὰρ σὺ προῖθης λόγων.‡

* Innocent. Epist. X. 149.

† Disputat. inter Catholic. &c. Thesaur. tom. V.

‡ Medea, Eurip. 546.

The Protestors, who are willing to accept that title, like the Greeks, subtle disputants, and Bonald remarks, that "in that they resemble all men of weak minds," would have no difficulty in raising a cloud, through which the keenest eye might for a moment be unable to follow the movements of truth. Every Catholic has not so much Homeric wisdom as to remain unmoved when assailed by such adversaries, contented to reply to them, "I know you may contradict this, and speak plausibly against it."

Στρατηγὴ δὲ γλῶσσ' ἐστὶ βροτῶν, πολίης δ' ἐνὶ μῦθοι

Παντοίοι' ἐπέων δὲ πολλὸς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.*

Prudence, a noble sense of courtesy, may enjoin silence; but, as Dante saith, "the power which wills, bears not supreme control: laughter and tears follow so closely on the passion which prompts them, that they wait not for the motions of the will in natures most sincere." The Catholic does but smile as one who winks; and thereupon assailants of this kind will rise tumultuous, and seek to cover him with sand, rushing on, like Scamander calling out to her sister Simois, and pressing forwards to overwhelm Achilles, saying, he thinks himself strong with the help of gods, and with his divine armour.

— καὶ δὲ μὲν αὐτὸν

Εὐδύσω ψαμάθοισιν Ὀδυσ, χίραδος περιχεύας
Μυρίον, οὐδέ οἱ δοτὶ ἐπιστήσονται Ἀχαιοὶ
'Αλλέξαι' τόσσον οἱ ἄσω καθύπερθε καλύψω.
Αὐτοῦ οἱ καὶ σῆμα τετεύχεται, οὐδέ τί μιν χρεώ
Ἔσται τυμβοχόης, ὅτε μιν θάπτωσι Ἀχαιοί.†

What else but sand are all their affirmations, censures, suspicions, jests, scoffs, calumnies, and misrepresentations?

It is not in the camp of the Protestors, reader, that you will find men resembling St. Thomas of Aquinum, of whom we read, "no one could be found who had ever heard an idle word escape from his lips."‡ Observe, that we are not left to arrive at this conclusion merely by inference. We have the letters of the chiefs to consult and there were not wanting to them friends more zealous than discreet, to transmit to us a knowledge of their table-talk. Without going back to the heretics of earlier times, we have only to consult the memoirs of

* Il. xx. 248.

‡ Bolland.

† Il. xxi. 315.

Luther to be convinced that the ordinary conversation of that singular man was absolutely nothing but the most gross tissue of detraction and calumny. When he speaks, for instance, of the Archbishop of Mayence taking up a bible, not knowing what book it was, only remarking that it was against Catholics, or when he speaks of the monks in general, one can hardly explain how any company of persons, whatever might have been their zeal and excitement at the time, while not openly and audaciously libertine, could listen to such accounts without expressing their indignation. Had these men been persuaded by the Apostle to lay aside lying, and speak truth to their neighbour, their table-talk would have been less attractive, no doubt, to the curious, but also the great work, of which they were the instruments, would have been stopped at the commencement; for, as the universal doctor said, in the twelfth century, "It is the vice of lying which produces heresy, and makes schisms; which generates suspicions, propagates rumours, clothes what should be naked, and strips naked what should be veiled over."*

The very principles of these men, if such they can be called, had no more consistency or solidity than their table-talk; they can only be used as so much sand. When in the company of Catholics who have studied religion, who are familiar with the history of the Church, and with the writings of the great and illustrious philosophers who, in different ages, have explained and developed, and defended its doctrine and discipline, the professed followers of the modern systems of religion can seldom utter a sentence bordering upon the ground of religion, or of history in connection with it, without placing the former in a position where they could not do their duty, without seeming to them to offer discourteous rudeness: for, as St. Augustin says, "the dissent of the tongue is as necessary as that of the heart, in order to avoid incurring the evil of others. *Duobus modis non te inquinat alienum malum, si non consentis, et si redarguis:*" and where is there pardon for those who, though in truth's defence, change conversation into obstinate debate? These misguided men, looking through a distorted medium, cannot avoid every moment evincing ignorance or enmity; they speak unskilfully; or if their knowledge be more, it is much darkened in their malice. Many of the mere terms of their ordinary

conversation are enough to unfold the prodigious distance which separated them from the Christian philosophy; and, as Eckbert says, it is disgraceful that those of the faithful who have learning should be mute and without tongues in their presence.* Not if their countenances were masked with an hundred visors, could a thought of theirs, how cautiously expressed soever, fail to wound the exquisite sense, which faith must ever guard. In the thirteenth century we read of persons who could detect them merely by their tone of voice, and their gestures.† In general they cannot even avoid contradicting innumerable sentences of the holy Scriptures, many also of their own principles laid down, and repeatedly republished in their formularies for daily and general use. With them a priest is generally a term of reproach, apostolic hearing of the Church a proof of slavery and superstition, meditation and retirement, and singing the praise of God in choirs, indolence. They retain some ancient forms, deprived of the spirit, which gave them life, and exclaim against them as the vestiges of Popery. Notwithstanding vague and abstract professions, they have proceeded virtually to place the highest good in material prosperity, in the sciences, in the mechanical arts, which minister to temporal comfort and convenience. They never view the course of time and the affairs of empires from the height of heavenly meditation, which despises the world, to follow Christ: a crucifix so far from being an epitome of their creed, is its refutation. Their maxims are drawn from the wisdom, or even the conventional caprice of the world; the virtues which they praise are all such as the Gentiles praised. The practical results of Christ's sermon on the beatitudes are either never spoken of, or else dismissed with contempt as so many Popish observances, or even perhaps as vestiges of Paganism, old oriental errors, utterly at variance with all sound enlightened views. Hence they are more conversant with Cicero than St. Augustin, with Horace than with the sacred poets of the Church. The author of the Imitation, if tried by their principles, has probably shown himself ignorant of every thing that a philosopher ought to know. By an involuntary impulse resulting from habit, they are every moment calling in question the very elements of the Christian faith, every moment supposing that their own mind, as

* *Alani de Insulis sum. de arte Prædicat. cap. xxvii.*

* Eckbert, *advers. Cath.*

† Alberic, *ad an. 1236.*

well as that of the person with whom they converse, is a *tabula rasa*; as Evrard says of the Waldenses, "affirming nothing, but proposing every thing as a matter of doubt; saying, thus we think, thus we imagine; it seems so to us, perhaps it is so;"* or else they are dogmatizing, and laying down maxims contrary to faith, with an air of knowing more than they choose to express, as if being withheld from speaking more strongly only by courteous forbearance; as the Cathari are described by Pope Innocent III. "sub quadam humilitatis specie sui elationem animi palliantes:"† so that, as the Corinthians said of war, "ἡκιστα γὰρ πόλεμος ἐπὶ ῥήτοσι χωρεῖ,"‡ in this combat of words, where men differ in faith, all conversation will be either a truce or a war, and no one can foresee how it will proceed; but events alone will determine it. Now for Catholics to have placed themselves in such a position, would have been both useless in regard to any effect which they might have desired to produce on others, and also full of danger and injury to themselves. Useless, for in general to attempt converting, in the course of ordinary conversation, souls deceived by diabolic fraud, is like attacking the hydra; as fast as one objection is refuted, another is sure to rise up against you. Here is a coil with protestation! If you defend the clergy of Guatemala to-day, you will have to meet some other charge equally fugitive to-morrow, resting upon similar ground, namely, the report of some miserable apostate, or mercenary scribe, who has regard for justice so far as it can tend to fill his purse. And it is not few words at random uttered that can set these greedy listeners to every slander free from error's thralldom, persuade them to lay aside what the Church terms "heretical depravity," and return to the unity of truth. How many of these listeners are in the number of those who search for reasons not to believe in the truth of the Catholic religion? Yes, but perhaps you will reply, I am still a debtor to them, and bound to offer myself as such. Grant this; but, on the other hand, has the spirit of the blessed merciful, descended upon you in more rich abundance than on St. Bernard, who wrote in these terms to Guido the Legate; "It is related that Arnald of Brescia is with you at present. Probably you hope to convert him. Would that it might be so! Would that some one could

from this stone raise up a child to Abraham! what a grateful present would mother Church receive from your hands! It is lawful to make the attempt; but a prudent man will be cautious not to transgress the number fixed by the Apostle, who says, 'Hæreticum hominem post unam et secundam correp-tionem devita.'"* Of what use to expose the evil of schism, when perhaps, like that of Gerard of Angouleme, it arises not from ignorance, but from secret ambition? To the calumnies of such men, St. Bernard deemed it a sufficient answer to allege the proverb, 'Occasio nunquam deerit ei qui vult recedere ab amico,' adding, 'This we say, not distrusting the justice of our cause, but being on our guard against his cunning; for though God hath produced his justice as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day, to those who will not open their eyes, his light is as the darkness.'"+

Only by a general change of their psychological condition, as philosophers would say, can any useful conviction be effected in such men; but it is not by agreeable conversation in the common intercourse of life, that such alterations take place; you must wait for sickness, adversity, the death of friends, a visit to a distant country: and full of danger and injury to the mind of Catholics would have been the rash exposing of themselves to such an atmosphere as encompassed men of this description, charged with every thing that can render truth difficult of apprehension, or difficult of being retained. To the influence of such men one may truly apply the strong poetic language of Æschylus, and say that "the venom of their thoughts falling to the ground, will cause a horrible pestilence."

Ἰὸς ἐκ φρονημάτων
Πίδω πρὸν ἀφελος ἀλάνης νόσος. ‡

You ask, how could the heroic constancy of Catholics in ages of faith have been endangered by the subtle wiles of sophists? Well, they were noble; yet their honourable metal might be wrought from that it is disposed; therefore, concludes the wise poet,

"Tis meet that noble minds keep ever with their likes;
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?"

Lord Bacon remarks, that it is a property of the human intelligence to be more moved and excited by affirmatives than by negatives. Who can estimate the power that a resolute affirmation exercises over the mind

* Evrard, cont. Wald. c. 13.

† Epist. IX. 185.

‡ Thucyd. Lib. i. c. 122.

* Epist. cxvi. + Epist. cxvii. ‡ Eumenid. 478.

of man? Now all persons wilfully separate from the household of faith are more or less distinguished by that disposition *pervicacia asserendi*, which Erasmus remarked in Luther. More than for any thing else they are remarkable for the faculty of affirming with an air of conviction, of affirming with a most intrepid indomitable contempt for what may be urged against them. In that lies their power, and they must have felt it even on themselves. Therefore, as a man is worth more for having been conversant with the wise and learned, so is he worth less for having heard the negations of men without faith. It may be very true that he is able to resist them at the moment, and disprove them; still, by the mere fact of having heard them, for all practical purposes of a Catholic life, it is highly probable that he has fallen in value; he has touched the pitch, and the laws of nature cannot be reversed to favour him. There remaineth a spot, and it will be owing to the grace of heaven if it should not descend to his very heart's core. A writer or speaker who opposes the supernatural life, steals from your intelligence by a process pretty nearly similar to that which an experienced thief adopts in extracting your money. He makes a bold push, and you imagine that you are only insulted, and have lost nothing; whereas, probably, the fact is, that he has succeeded, and perhaps even beyond his hopes; only in this case he has not, like the common thief, stolen trash, but that which is infinitely more valuable than even your fame—the treasure of your faith. You will not believe it possible, but he has, with a word, with a bold affirmation, robbed you of more than life; and, without enriching himself, has gone away, leaving you at some future time to make the discovery, and feel yourself poor indeed.

Rightly, therefore, did men of the middle ages teach, when they said, that joining in the conversation, or consulting often the books of sophists, and men wilfully at variance with the Catholic church, though it be for the purpose of refuting them, is a perilous thing; in fact, in most instances, it is like conversing with the society of the profane, dissipated world, from which so few return without having lost some portion of charity and of hope. The venerable Bede says, "*Soli ei conceditur hæreticorum libros legere qui a Deo solidatus est in fide Catholicâ, ut verborum dulcedine, vel astutiâ nequeat ab eâ segregari.*"* and with double

force may such an argument be used with respect to colloquial intercourse. St. Francis Xavier expresses the horror of his soul on meeting with Christians who did not believe in the truth of the adorable sacrament of the altar, from not frequenting it, or from the constant communication which they had with Gentiles, Mahometans, or heretics. Insensibly, almost necessarily, you imbibe the sentiments of those with whom you often converse.

Mark how you issue from the rueful wood! how changed is that spirit which hath listened to the syrens! You look back to peril with delight, and seem struck with sadness as soon as the sign of Catholics is made. Doth belief still linger in that bosom? then you forget, or disobey with voluntary weakness, the precept of the wise man, "*Noli esse humilis in sapientiâ tuâ.*" Haughty, perhaps, and unbending in all the ceremonial of manners, you will be timid, yielding, and basely pusillanimous, in replying to the adversaries of truth. Those who have met you will need no one to tell them that they have seen the poet, the novelist, the senator, the universal speculator perhaps, but who shall convince them that they have seen the Catholic? Though you may not imitate the bard, who, long conformed to pagan rites, being a Christian secretly through fear, and who, for that lukewarmness, is said by Dante to have been doomed to pace four centuries and more round the fourth circle;—yet you have learned to breathe the atmosphere of scorn; the new instructors are of your train, and to them your reply is always, I concede.—"It might have been well; tis pity it hath been so: would that all were as you say: think not that I resemble such: I go not with them: I know not the man." And thus, at length, as Raimond says, in our heroic poesy, to those who seemed to shun the pagan's pride:—

——— You let go your faith,
And dare not once lift up your coward eyes
'Gainst him that you and Christ himself defies.

Ah, if ever a zeal for the house of God had eaten your souls, with what horror would you have contemplated the possibility of your lapsing into such a state as this! You affirm it was the desire of dispelling prejudice, and the hope of converting men to truth, which actuated you; but say, has the result of such intercourse been, that mind, conscious to itself of sincere faith and charity not feigned, which is weak with the weak, and inflamed with those that are offended; which, as St. Bernard says, fears

* Comment. in Prophet. Lib. i.

nothing, neither after the example of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to be led captive into Egypt and Chaldea with transgressors, nor with holy Job to become a brother of dragons, and a companion of the ostrich, nor with Moses, what is far worse, to be blotted out of the book of God? * In the judgment of men, in ages of faith, though nothing but the disuse of ancient and holy Catholic practices, were to be the consequence of such promiscuous fellowship, there would have been sufficient reason for refraining from it. The two disciples recognised the Saviour of men in the breaking of bread. How so? "Because this man of God," says St. Ambrose, "according to his custom, and by a ceremony which was peculiar to him, blessed the bread before he ate it." "Now," adds Bourdaloue, "it is by this sign that he has always recognised and that he still recognises his true disciples." But this holy custom would have been almost abolished in the world, as that great orator complains, or it would have been despised as a thing frivolous, and without sense, if the constant intermixture of Catholics, and of persons who inculcated the modern opinions, had been permitted.

The right of distinguishing between fundamental points, and what some might please to think matters of indifference, being once assumed by private men, they might, perhaps, in compliance with the customs of polite society, have continued to repair to the churches on Sundays, but there was a reflection of Peter the Venerable, which would alone have been sufficient to deter men of generous natures from entering them, if the preceding days had been past, from choice in the company of persons who make a jest of the most holy mysteries of faith, and who are its sworn and professed enemies. His reflection was this, and as long as there was any chivalry in the soul, it decided the question, "*Quo vultu, qua conscientia ad altare Salvatoris accedere, qua fronte ad colloquia piæ Matris ipsius venire tentabo, cum blasphemis hostibus ejus blanditus fuero?*" †

Let no rash inference, however, be drawn from these statements respecting the zeal and prudence of men in ages of faith. Nothing was to be done through pride or resentment, or the love of selfish ease. Nothing was intended against the practice of wide and generous charity; but men were only warned from seeking danger, and from

mistaking in themselves ambition, the love of dissipation, and perhaps the secret encroachments of infidelity, for the love of their neighbour. Many are the examples related in ancient story, to preserve men from the sin of uncharitable severity towards persons separated from the Church. In the *Speculum Morale*, which passes under the name of Vincent of Beauvais, it is related, from the Lives of the Fathers, that a holy old man, living in the desert of Egypt, opened his door one night, and let in a certain priest of the Manichæans, who was going to visit one of his sect, when he was benighted, and forced to ask a lodging. The old man knew who he was, but received him no less with cheerfulness, and made a bed for him. All that night long the Manichæan could do nothing but reflect upon his great charity. Truly, said he, this must be a servant of God. The next morning he fell at his feet, gave himself up as his disciple, and remained with him ever afterwards.* In showing hospitality through compassion, men could never incur danger; and, without doubt, there were exceptions to all rules of discipline. The whole class of youth, for instance, was to be considered as placed without the category; and, in the ranks of the Protestors innumerable men appeared, who were never believed to be there from choice. Wherever there was generosity, candour, and innocence, Catholics might feel, in anticipation at least, at home.

The history of later times is not without illustrious examples to prove, that what seemed so great and admirable to the Roman philosopher, might be realized also, without injury to faith, in Catholics, and those who had been placed by birth in a situation apart, "*quod quidem erat magnum, de summa re dissentientes, in eadem consuetudine amicitie permanere.*" †

Sir Humphrey Davy, in his *Dialogues*, maintains with strictness the consistency of his imaginary character, in making Ambrosio as a Catholic reply to the student of Edinburgh, in these terms:—"You have mistaken me, if you think that I am shocked by your opinions; I have seen too much of the wanderings of human reason ever to be surprised by them, and the views you have adopted are not uncommon amongst young men of very superior talents, who have only slightly examined the evidence of revealed religion." Such an answer is in perfect accordance with the faith and pro-

* *De Officio Episcop.* c. 4.

† *Pet. Ven. de Miracul. Lib. ii. cap. 15.*

* *Speculum Morale*, vol. iii. p. 10. † *Phil. ii.*

fession of this speaker; but the illustrious author is guilty of an error, in his situation most pardonable, when he deems it necessary to state, that Ambrosio, to whose conversations, while in Italy, he ascribes his being made religious, whose cool judgment, and sound and humble faith, had induced him also to change his opinions respecting the origin of society, was "a Catholic of the most liberal school."

If he had said, a Catholic bred in the school of the Vatican, the qualification would have heightened the merit of his picture, for it is men who are strictly and fervently Catholic, and not those who mix up the notions of modern sophists with religion, that entertain the views which excited his admiration. It is the merciful and compassionate man whom the Church, in her vesper office, every Sunday, commemorates with praise, who orders his words with judgment, because he shall not be moved for ever. And such is the humble ascetic of the middle ages, who beseeches God to impart to him a divine sweetness, "that it may be a light to his intelligence, not alone to secure his reason from the deceits of heretic fraud, and to enable it to vindicate the truth of faith from the cunning wiles of adversaries, but also to correct in him a too indiscreet vehemence of conversation, knowing that God, the Supreme Wisdom, must be loved not alone fervently, but also wisely; for that otherwise the spirit of error might easily delude his zeal, if he neglected knowledge, since the cunning enemy has no machination more effectual to withdraw love from the heart, than that of inducing men to walk incautiously, and without reason."*

Proceeding now to show that the spirit and object of the ecclesiastical measures, directed against persons who had become obnoxious to censures, agreed with mercy, we shall find a great concurrence of evidence in historical sources; for amongst them I will not reckon the works of those artists, in modern times, who are delighted to transfer the countenances of the heathen persecutors, in the old paintings, to their portraits of monks and other ecclesiastics of the middle age, whom they represent holding a crucifix, with eyes half pressed without their sockets, and hands wrathfully clenched, in presence of victims who are to be immolated to their bigotry, forgetting or wishing to conceal the fact that these men, who were holy, notwithstanding whatever they may say, knew not the signs of ire, envy, and fanaticism;

* Idiota, contemp. cap. xi.

for heavenly minds from such distempers foul are ever clear.

These are the men who used to say with Bernardine, general of the Capuchins, "If God should call me to account in judgment for being too severe and inflexible, I should have nothing to answer for myself in defence; but, if He should accuse me of being too clement and merciful, I should find an excuse instantly; for I could reply, that I had learned mercy from Him who had also exceeded measure in showing pity."*

Abuses occasionally were unavoidable in affairs relative to the ecclesiastical government, and accordingly Melchior Canus says, "I do not approve of all laws or censures; for some may have wanted prudence. It is pernicious to think that one ought to defend every thing whatsoever, *Non eget Petrus mendacio nostro; nostra adulatione non eget.*" But what I have undertaken to show is, that mercy was the rule, and its neglect, the exception.

"Whoever thinks," says St. Augustin, "that he understands the Divine Scriptures, or any part of them, but in such a sense as does not agree with the double charity of God and his neighbour, he doth not as yet understand them: but whoever comes to a conclusion favourable to this charity, though perhaps he does not speak the sense of the passage, he is not perniciously deceived. *'Si ea sententia fallitur, quæ ædificat charitatem, quæ finis præceptis est, ita fallitur, ac si quisquam errore deserens viam, eo tamen per agrum pergat quo etiam via illa perducit.'* However, he is to be corrected, and to be shown the utility of not deserting the way, lest, by the custom of erring, he should be led astray."†

The Church applies the same rule to the explanation of her own judicial sentences, and therefore we read, in the collection of Ives de Chartres, that "all ecclesiastical decrees are to be interpreted in the sense which is most agreeable to charity."‡ This was certainly leaving far behind the maxim of the ancient poet:

"Leniter qui sæviunt, sapiunt magis."§

And it was as far from originating in the prudence which dictated that sentence, as the fruits of love must have exceeded the result of a policy, which only required a mitigation of rigour. What was the spirit in

* Annales Capucinatorum, an 1537.

† S. August. de Doct. Christ. Lib. i. cap. 36.

‡ Ivoonis Carnot. Decret. Prolog.

§ Plantus, Bacch. iii. 3.

regard to censures of the men whom holy Church hath canonized? You may learn it from St. Bernard. Take, for example, his letter to Alard, in which he says, "You are too bitter against this man: I fear that your zeal is not according to knowledge. Was it not the part of humility not to do to another what you would not that another should do to you? Nay, it was required by your rule of perfection to imitate the Apostle, saying, 'I am made weak to the weak, that I may gain the weak.' And again, 'Do you, who are spiritual, instruct him in a spirit of lenity, considering yourself, lest you should be also tempted.' But the Prior, you say, expelled him, not I: true, but you persuaded, you in every way compelled him; and now, when the Prior has compassion, and desires to recall him, you continue obdurate. I ask you, what is this security, that, when all others have pity, you alone remain implacable? But you tell me, that I know not how justly he was expelled. I neither ask nor care whether justly or unjustly; but this alone is what I complain of, this alone is what surprises me, that after humbly satisfying and promising amendment, you will not suffer him to be received. If he were expelled justly, it is still pious to receive him back."* Perhaps you will say that this was merely a case of domestic discipline in one community.

Hear, then, how an English abbot of the middle ages speaks in general of persons separated from the Church: "There remain those who are without," says blessed Aëlred of Rievaulx, "Gentiles and Jews, hereticks and schismatics, for whose ignorance we should grieve, for whose infirmity we should feel compassion, for whose malice we should weep, and to whom we should grant the assistance of our prayers with pious affection, that they also may be found with us in Christ Jesu our Lord."†

St. Theresa, and all the seraphic spirits of the Catholic Church, speak in the same strain: "God of my heart," she cries, "only true God, how great is the petition which I present to thee, when I pray thee to love those who do not love thee, to open to those who do not knock, to heal those who not only take a pleasure in being infirm, but who constantly labour to increase their infirmities? Thou sayest, O my God, that thou art come into the world to seek sinners:

these, O Lord, are the true sinners. Regard not our blindness; regard only the rivers of blood which thy Son hath shed for our salvation. Make thy clemency shine amidst the darkness of our malice. Regard us, O Lord, as the work of thy hands, and save us by thy goodness and thy mercy."*

Such were the dispositions with which monks and nuns regarded, from their cloistered cells, the sinners who scorned and detested them. How well did they remember our Lord's reply to those that would have called down fire from heaven on the cities that refused to receive Him. "*Filius hominis non venit animas perdere sed salvare.*"†

Many thought, with Origen of old, that those whom Christ sent to preach his Gospel, when rejected by any city, were to understand their Master's words, commanding them to shake off the dust from their feet, as teaching that they should so do in most benignant mercy, least perchance that dust should be reserved as an evidence against them in the day of judgment of their unbelief.‡ The merciful Father of men, though He approves of the fervour of a devout mind, desires not that zeal should ever spoil the beauty of holy mercy.§ He will cause the gourd to wither, that his prophet, who is made to weep for the loss of a plant, may learn not to demand the destruction of a city.

If we proceed to examine the conduct of the Church during the middle ages, towards unfaithful and corrupt members, we shall find that it was in conformity with these sentiments of love and mercy, majestic, yet most mild; calm, yet compassionate. "The Church," says St. Augustin, "seeking the salvation of all with maternal charity, feels herself placed, as it were, between the frantic and the lethargic. The frantic are unwilling to be restrained, and the lethargic are unwilling to be excited; but she perseveres, with the diligence of charity, to chastise the frantic, to stimulate the lethargic, and to love both: *phreneticum castigare, lethargicum stimulare, ambos amare.*"||

Mabillon is filled with astonishment at the patience and forbearance of the sovereign Pontiffs, and the bishops of the whole Church, in suffering Berenger, during the space of thirty years, to continue publishing such errors, lapsing again after repeated

* Epist. ccccxiv.

† Aëdredi Rievallensis, Abb. *Compendium Speculi Charitatis*, cap. 12.

* St. Theresa's Exclamations, viii.

† Luc. ix. 56.

‡ Cresolii Auth. Sao. Origen. Hom. 4. in Gen.

§ Cresolii Anrh. Sac. 570.

|| Epist. 159.

recantations, and openly insulting them while violating the most sublime mysteries of faith.* Even the writers most opposed to the ecclesiastical authority are struck with this fact. Schoell acknowledges that Berenger, against whom the whole of the west had raised one cry, and whom four or five councils had condemned, escaped from all punishment, owing to the tolerance of Gregory VII. who reprobated his doctrine, without permitting his person to be persecuted.†

The king of Aragon petitioned the Council of Lavaur that Gaston de Bearn, Count of Poix, might be re-established in his rights; and what was the answer of the Prelates? "To mention," said they, "but a few of the innumerable charges against him; he is bound with the confederates leagued against the Church; he is the open and grievous persecutor of the churches and of the clergy; he takes arms to assist the Count of Toulouse; he had with him the murderer of the Legate, Peter de Castelnovo, of holy memory; he maintains the roturiers; he led them last year into the cathedral church of Oloron, where he cut down the pyx, and, horrible to utter, scattered the Lord's body on the ground, while one of these men, in derision, clothed himself in pontifical habits, intending to represent a pontiff singing mass; contrary to his oath, he has laid violent hands on clerks: for these and many other acts, sentences of excommunication and anathema have been pronounced against him: nevertheless, if he will satisfy the Church as he ought, and gain the benefit of absolution, afterwards he shall be heard de jure suo."‡

Every society has the right of expelling from its pale such members as outrage its fundamental rules; but the measures of the Church, in the exercise of this unquestionable right, were conceived with intentions not alone of self-defence, but of mercy towards the very persons whom she ejected. "Lest we should neglect our pastoral office, by not driving away the wolves from the flock, we deem it right," says Innocent III. to the clergy and people of Viterbo, "to pass more severe decrees against the defenders, promoters, and followers of heretics, in order that they who cannot be recalled to the way of justice by themselves, may be confounded in their defenders, and when they see themselves shunned by all, may desire to be reconciled to unity."§

* Præfat. in VI. Sæcul. Bened. § 3.

† Schoell, Cours d'Hist. des États Europ. liv. v. c. 12.

‡ Hist. Albig. cap. 66.

§ Epist. Inn. III. Lib. i. 1.

No personal or human indignation can be traced in the great judicial sentences by which Rome sought to protect the interests of men and nations from the power of tyrants. As Pope Innocent III. said to the king of Portugal, when the latter presumed to affirm that the Pontiff had lent a credulous ear to reports, and had spoken disrespectfully against him before all, "such conduct would be a reproach to our prudence, because the holy successors of St. Peter have been accustomed not to revile, but, after the example of Christ, with patience to endure being reviled."* The decree of the Council of Constance, commanding that the bones of Wickliff should be dug up, and removed out of consecrated ground, in testimony of his being an excommunicated person, can never be understood as arguing a want of mercy in these fathers, when we consider what they owed to the living: and if we bear in mind the prodigious errors, and their pernicious effects, which that act was intended to denounce. Melancthon himself acknowledges, that Wickliff "was the cause of much tumult and trouble in England."†

Those to whom Lambeth is the Vatican, point at what they call the Lollard's tower, at that palace, with as much interest as if they guided us to the prison of the holy apostles in the Roman forum. Yet one of their most distinguished writers,‡ who is always hostile to the Catholic Church, and favourable to its opponents of every nation and period, admits that the Lollards were highly dangerous, that the greater number of them were eager for havoc, and held opinions incompatible with the peace of society, that the public safety required such opinions to be repressed, founded, as they were, in gross error, and tending to direct an enormous evil. This statement is repeated by another writer, on the same side, who even observes, "how little it is to the credit of Richard II. that he suffered the principles of these men to be propagated without interruption; and that had Wycliffe been stopped at the commencement of his misguided career, well would it have been for the security, no less than the honour, of the country."§

"Certainly it was a thing worthy of great commendation to all posterity," says a wise and humane magistrate of France, alluding to this act of the Council of Constance, "that when the Popedom was infinitely

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xiv. 8.

† Comment. in Arist. Polit.

‡ Southey.

§ Europe in the Middle Ages, vol. iv. 298. Lardner's Cyclop.

afflicted by the schism, the universal church should have taken in hand the cause of the Pope, and sustained it virtuously against heresy and error."* It was necessary, for the preservation of the people, that the Church, by a solemn act, should proclaim her horror of such doctrines, and execute a tardy justice in pronouncing their author an outcast from her communion. Men like John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Henry Percy, Marshal of England, who had borne Wickliff company to St. Paul's, when he was summoned to appear there before the Bishop of London, on purpose to discountenance that prelate in the exercise of his undoubted authority, and to animate Wickliff and his followers in their courses, were not the representatives of mercy, but mere reckless and selfish politicians, the forerunners of those refined hypocrites, who, in subsequent times, ranged themselves under the banners of freedom. The Church was not actuated by intolerance in requiring the fulfilment of conditions in proof of sincerity before she restored to her bosom men who had outraged faith. Milton's Satan knew the justice and wisdom of her measures on such occasions, and might give a useful lesson to those conceding counsellors, who would abolish discipline, in order to invite Protestors back.

But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon
Would height recall high thoughts, how soon
unsay
What feigned submission swore?†

But where a reasonable ground of confidence was seen, the knot was disengaged with eagerness; for they who held the keys from Peter were of him instructed, "that they should err rather in opening than in keeping fast; so but the suppliant at their feet implore."‡ Indeed, that the spirit of the Church ought to be all mercy and forbearance, was every year proclaimed, at the commencement of her great penitential season of Lent, when, in her address to the Almighty in the introit on Ash Wednesday, she says, "*Misereris omnium, Domine, et nihil odisti eorum quæ fecisti.*" Let us, however, turn to the facts, and mark the conduct of her guides. Witness then, St. Ambrose selling the sacred vessels to ransom some Illyrian slaves, most of whom are Arians, St. Martin of Tours, using every effort to save the heretics, whom Maximus

wished to sacrifice to sanguinary zeal, going to Treves to intercede with the emperor in favour of the Priscillianists, and considering as excommunicated Itacius and the other bishops who had excited him to rage against them, St. Augustin supplicating the proconsul of Africa in behalf of the Donatists, saying, "*Non tibi vile sit neque contemptibile, fili honorabiliter dilectissime, quod vos rogamus ne occidantur, pro quibus Dominum rogamus ut corrigantur.*"* and Lactantius writing in the same strain, "*Defendenda enim est religio non occidendo, sed moriendo; non sævitia, sed patientia; non scelere, sed fide.*"† Open the celebrated work of St. Gregory on the pastoral care, and you will find that mercy and moderation are enforced in almost every page. Observe, again, the qualities which St. Bernard requires in those whom he recommends Pope Eugene to select. "They must be men," he says, "who are not of a hardened front, but inodest and timid; who fear nothing but God, and hope nothing but from God; who stand manfully for the afflicted, and judge in equity for the meek of the earth; who are discreet in commanding, sober in zeal, and not remiss in mercy; who do not despise, but who teach, the vulgar; who do not load with burthens, but who cherish, the poor; who do not fear, but who despise, the threats of princes."‡

Victorius the bishop writes to St. Avitus, to know whether the oratories or basilicas of the heretics might be taken possession of by the Catholics, and converted to the use of the true religion. St. Avitus regards it as a difficult question, because, if a Catholic king were to be prevailed on by Catholic bishops to transfer those basilicas of the heretics to the Catholics, the heretics would not unjustly complain that they were persecuted, *et Catholicam mansuetudinem calumnias hereticorum atque gentilium plus deceat sustinere quam facere*; for it would be hard if those who perish by an open perversity should be able to flatter themselves on their confession or their martyrdom. "You will say, perhaps," he continues, "that the heretics, if they had the power, would attack our altars. It is true, nor do I deny it. These invaders, who seize the churches of others, rage whenever they can with foul talons; but to offer violence, to take forcible possession of places, to transfer altars, are acts that belong not to the dove. More especially, therefore, should be dreaded

* Pâquier, *Recherches de la France*, liv. iii. 26. † iv. 93. ‡ Dante, *Purg.* IX.

* Epist. C. † Divin. Instit. Lib. v. ‡ De Consideratione, liv. iv. c. 4.

that which the heretic thinks himself permitted to do. I wish not that the places of worship of the heretics should be seized; I desire rather that they may be abandoned, like the tents of herdsmen. *Semper optandum est, non ut mutata transeant, sed infrequentata torpescant.* What we should wish is, that an eternal desolation may be their fate, by means of the correction of the people, and that we may never receive what ought only to be rejected by themselves as a consequence of their conversion.* The thirty-third canon of the council of Epauna forbade the basilicas of heretics to be used for holy purposes; but the first council of Orleans desires that, after a conquest, the churches of the Goths should be received.

"Whoever is truly animated with the spirit of the Church," says a recent author, "far from being fanatical, will always have the spirit of gentleness, will be the enemy of violence, the promoter of peace.†" When Hincmar presented his four memorials to the council of Soissons respecting the grounds of his proceedings against Vulfade and other clerks who were ordained by Ebon, the last, which was written personally against Vulfade, indicating great passion, the fathers refused to listen to the reading of the whole piece.‡ When the same Hincmar deemed it necessary to act with severity against the person of Gottschalk, his conduct called forth the indignant murmurs of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of France. Lupus, abbot of Ferrers, Prudentius Tricassinus, the Church of Lyons, and the councils of Valence and of Langres, condemned such measures "against a poor monk.§" Yet I would not venture to pronounce the archbishop or his illustrious contemporary Raban Maur intolerant.

I confess the first almost disarms me by the humility of his death; for even the epitaph which he wrote for himself, and which was on his tomb in the abbey of St. Remy, beginning with, "*Nomine non merito Præsul Hincmarus,*" ought, I think, to induce one to set out in search of some other source of harshness, less impure than the guilt which that word implies; and with respect to the latter, a recent historian, who says that his fifty-one treatises display equal ability and intolerance, has only proved by that sentence that he had made himself better acquainted with their number

than their contents. Occasionally, indeed, this great man may have failed in respect to the grace of moderation; but who so constant as never to be moved? St. Augustine was scandalized at the manner in which St. Jerome treated Rufinus, and he wrote to tell him so. "I have read the letter, which you have written against Rufinus; and I confess, my dear brother, it was with grief I read it, to see two persons, once so united, now so animated against each other. Although it is clear what pains you take not to render injury for injury, nevertheless I could not avoid, while reading it, feeling my heart penetrated with sorrow and fear. Woe, woe to the world, because of scandals! Who can be safe after seeing you, at your age, engaged in such divisions, and while following the Lord in that pleasant land where he said to his disciples, 'My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you.' If I could find you together in one place, I would cast myself at your feet, in the transport of my grief, and I would conjure you both with tears, by what you owe to yourselves, by what you owe to one another, and by what you owe to all the faithful, and particularly to the weak, for whom Christ died, to whom you give on the theatre of this life a spectacle so terrible and so pernicious,—I would conjure you, I say, not to publish writings in which there appears so much emotion against one another—writings which you cannot recall, and which, therefore, may be a source of renewed hostility many years hence."* What charity and tolerance in the rule given by St. Gregory Nazianzen,† in which he condemns those who, in disputing against the heretics, load them with opprobrious words, as if their argument could be strengthened by such folly. "The minds of the adversaries," he says, "should be exasperated by no acrimonious language, but the greatest indulgence should be shown to them lest they should become more impudent."

St. Dionysius of Alexandria found the advantage of the mildness recommended by St. Gregory Nazianzen, when he went to correct some priests, who had fallen into the heresy of the Millenarians. He convened them for the sake of a mutual conference and explanation, and for three whole days, from morning till evening, endeavoured to show them their error. "Great" he says, "was their love of truth, and their care lest they might wish to adhere to precon-

* *S. Aviti Epist. de Basilicis Hæreticorum.*

† *Scotti Teorema di Polit. Crist. 144.*

‡ *Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. i. 122.*

§ *Gallia Christiana, 488.*

* *Epist. ad Hieron. 73.*

† *Serm. 26 and 32.*

ceived opinions after they had been proved false. They argued fairly; and when refuted, they retracted with simplicity. Finally, their chief, in the name of all the others, declared that they would never again make mention of that question, nor interrupt the concord of the brethren. Thus the conference ended, to the joy of all men." Mabillon cites this example, in his treatise on monastic studies;* and all great Catholic writers, when occasion has offered, have inculcated the same lesson. "No one," says Pelisson, "has ever persuaded another by addressing him in insulting language. It is not the nature of the human mind to give up its arms immediately to the human mind. It must think, meditate, and deliberate with itself, and be convinced in secret, before being convinced in public."†

All those great champions of orthodoxy who are the most accused of having pursued erring men with severity, were precisely the most liberal and benign in their interpretation of what was suspected or guilty. St. Athanasius excused Origen his various errors, saying, that he had proposed his opinions only as hypothetical, and as matter for question.‡ "How important is it," exclaims a German philosopher, after remarking the conduct of Athanasius, "to hear this judgment of so great a bishop, so steadfast in the faith! How differently, at present, do men judge who have little or nothing in common with Athanasius!"§

Heliand, the celebrated monk, of whose chronicle many fragments have been preserved by Vincent de Beauvais, who remarks, that in his time, the leaves of the work had been dispersed, and in part lost, has merely said of John Scot Erigena, that he composed a book *De Divisione Naturæ*, very useful, if he should be pardoned for some things, in which he deviated from the line of the Latins, while fixing his eyes steadfastly on the Greeks.|| Henry of Ghent, in his great work on theology, quotes many passages from his writings.¶ It is not that pious and learned Catholics, in using or defending the works of men condemned by the Church, attempted to invalidate her sentence, but that they either showed that the reprobated book should be ascribed to a different author, or that the text was mali-

ciously corrupted, or that the author erred more in words than in mind; so that they stand upon a question of mere fact, on which the Church gives no judgment. Thus did St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, Picus of Mirandula, Merlinus, Sixtus of Sienna, Halloix, and Huet defend Origen. Thus did also Sirmondus and Petavius vindicate, from the charge of heresy, the writings of Theodoret and Iba; and thus, also, did Gregorius de Laura write an apology for the abbot Joachim, to whom were ascribed certain books that were condemned by the fourth Lateran council. It seems to be a propensity of many learned men, in modern times, to seek the honour of peculiar penetration and solidity, by detecting heretical expressions in the works of others. Their wits appear like Dogberry's, who, in noting down the prisoner's reply that they serve God, would command the clerk to write God first, lest God should come after the name of such villains. Nothing of this captious trifling can be detected in the polemical works of the middle age. The saying of St. Augustin was then a rule with theologians:—"Non enim quia durum aliquid, ideo rectum; aut quia stupidum est, ideo sanum."* Therefore, their works seem to many, at present, to be poetical and imprudent.

The spirit in which theological controversies were often then conducted, may be witnessed in the letters which passed between Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remi, and Nicolaus, a monk of St. Albans, in England, relative to the doctrine of the conception—"We both seek," says the former, who defended the pious belief of Christians on that head, "devotion of heart, not verbosity of mouth, secret admiration, not public discussion. We both run to follow her, and I wish it may be towards her. One intention unites our souls, though our language may be different. Are we wiser, or more learned than Augustin or Jerome, who, though unanimous in faith, accordant in religion, fervent in charity, sublime in the science of the Scriptures, and similar in authority, yet are found greatly differing in some opinions? Behold the cedars of Libanus; these lofty palms bent hither and thither in these things, and yet never moved in the root of charity, each abounding in his sense, and both united in the articles of faith. Is it strange, then, that our light stubble should be borne thus by opposite winds? If I should communicate all my

* De Studiis Monast. pars ii. cap. xvi.

† Pelisson, *Reflexions sur les Differends de la Religion*, I. ‡ Epist. ad Serap. IV.

§ Staudenmaier's *Joan. Scot. Erigena*, i. 267.

|| Vincent. Bellov. *Spec. Hist. Lib.* xxix. c. 108.

¶ Henricus Gaudevens. *Somm.* vol. ii. art. lxxiv. q. ii. f. 283.

* De Civitat. Dei, Lib. xiv. cap. 9.

superfluous words, I should plant a grove near the altar. I am even more strict in my expressions of reverence than you who dispute this pious belief, precipitating words while I dispose mine with judgment. You praise the blessed Virgin, and I also; you proclaim her holy, and I also; you exalt her above the choir of angels, and I also; you say that she was free from all sin, and I also. In this offering of veneration I go with you, and think with you; but if you wish to fabricate any new form of language, contrary to that which is approved of by the see of Peter, whose office it is to approve or to condemn the order of the universal Church, then I stand firm, and pass not the forbidden bounds. As for this question, you did well to concede to me that many things are presumed of the blessed Virgin which are nowhere read; and that we are to stand to such presumptions until the contrary can be proved. If any words of my letter have wounded you, forgive me, and depend upon receiving the same indulgence from me. Pray for me, my dearest friend, and I wish that I may behold you face to face.* The prayer of St. Augustin was also that of St. Thomas, before taking up a pen to write against any adversary: "O Domine, mitte mitigationes in cor, ut pugnando charitate veritatis, non amittam veritatem charitatis." Never did an angry word escape from his lips, say those who had assisted at his scholastic acts, always was he faithful to the warning of the Holy Ghost, "Fili in mansuetudine serva animam tuam."

As for continual oral disputations with persons who had separated themselves from the communion of the faithful, the Catholic Church had no such custom. She terminated her disputes with adversaries of this kind, by inviting them to practise that little lesson of love, in which consisted all her grace, and all her knowledge. If any man or party sought to be contentious or to challenge her to arguments, she repeated the sentence of the apostle: and whenever any of her ministers were induced to concede to the challenge of her disobedient children, and to meet them in the strife of words, the holy and the wise were not slow to raise the voice of complaint and regret. "In this danger of the republic," says a religious magistrate of France, writing, at the time, of the great troubles of religion, "it seems to me, that we should have

recourse to God by humble prayers, processions, and public rogations, that He may be pleased to turn aside His anger from us. I wish, as a good Christian, and a good citizen, that we had one faith, and one law; not that I would call a new council, for I see no good derived from councils in which a deliberative voice is given to those who are separated from the common and ancient faith. We have had sufficient proof, in our time, in the city of Poissy, when we conferred before King Charles IX. with the Calvinist ministers against the advice of the wise Cardinal de Tournon, who foresaw the inconveniences. Open the door to disputes, and there is no article of faith which a disingenuous spirit cannot call in question. Look back to antiquity, and you will find that, in all times, the union of the universal Church depended upon the chair of St. Peter, and of his successors, in the city of Rome. The heretics sometimes have found more hardy combatants for themselves than the Catholics. Some ancients attest, that the books of the Arians were more learned and better constructed than ours. Nevertheless, their doctrine being false and full of lies, died of itself, without any artifice of men. The same thing happened to the Pelagians, Novatians, Donatists, and others of the like stamp; and I make no doubt that such will be the end of Calvinism, provided we bring some zeal and devotion on our part which will be affected, not by contentions and conferences with heretics, nor by murders and wars, which produce atheism, but by discipline, and virtue, and honour.* No narrow prejudices prevented Catholic philosophers from enjoying what was great and admirable in the works of the Gentiles, or of persons obnoxious, in other respects, to the censures of the Church. St. Jerome was delighted with the genius of Origen; and St. Augustin, in an eloquent passage of his work on the city of God, after enumerating the various branches of art and science, the cultivation of which displays the noble nature of the human mind, adds, "In ipsis, postremo erroribus et falsitatibus defendendis, quam magna claruerint ingenia philosophorum atque hæreticorum, quis æstimare sufficiat?† It is certain, that the Church herself invariably judged of men as of books, "in globo." When the general tenor was good, she did not subtilize on detached parts.

* Petri Collens. Lib. ix. Epist. 10.

* Pasquier, Lettres, liv. x. 6.

† De Civ. Dei, Lib. xxii. c. 24.

How little do the moderns seem aware that in the monasteries of the middle age the liberal and truly tolerant spirit of the great men of Christian antiquity was always found. It was the monks, as Bede can testify, who had taught a British king that the religion of men must be voluntary, and that no compulsory measures were pleasing to God. It was the monks who evinced mercy and benignity to the Pagans of the north, whenever a zeal more warlike than holy began to dictate acts of cruelty against them. Remark the following expressions, in a monastic chronicle, concerning the Pagans of Prussia:—"Multa poterant dici de hoc populo laudabilia in moribus, si haberent solam fidem Christi."* So far were these men from imitating the sullen silence of the Roman historians, who have allowed nothing to come down to us respecting the virtue of the nations whom they conquered!

It was frequently owing to ecclesiastical influence that the works even of art belonging to Pagans and Sarassins were spared by the civil power, which would have doomed them to destruction; as when King James I. of Aragon, on the capture of Valencia, would have destroyed the great mosque, in order that a church might be built on the spot, if the bishop, finding it ample, and wondrously adorned with emblems and variegated work, had not persuaded him to spare it, that it might be purified and converted into a Christian temple.†

It is a fact important to remark, that rulers of the Church were frequently urged on by the public opinion to condemn offenders against faith, and that they expressed the greatest reluctance to put in force even the mild and wholly spiritual sentence of the ecclesiastical authority. Ives de Chartres writes to Roscelin, saying, that he hears that since the council of Soissons he still continues, by clandestine disputations, to defend his former opinion, which he had abjured. He implores him to beware how he rends the vest of God, armed with human reasoning and an unhappy eloquence. "Nevertheless," he continues, "not on account of myself should I fear or dislike your presence, hoping better things of you, and things nearer to salvation; but some of our citizens, curious in investigating the lives of others, though

indolent to correct their own, hold you to be hateful, and me to be suspected on account of you; and when they hear your name and former conversation, they suddenly, after their manner, run to gather up stones. Therefore, I advise you, assuming the patience of blessed Job, to say with him, 'Sustinebo iram Dei, quoniam merui, donec justificet causam meam;' for I testify that if you, being converted, should wish to fly from the vanity of your carnal sense, the breasts of divine consolation will not be wanting to you; and Mother Church, which showed paternal severity to the devious, will receive back the corrected with maternal piety. It remains, therefore, that you write a palinode, and that you repair publicly the vest of your Lord, which you have rent publicly—that you may be loved and restored by us, and embraced with benefits."‡

In France, when the last heresies commenced in the sixteenth century, it was a general complaint that the bishops did not evince sufficient activity and energy in punishing those who were infected with it. Therefore recourse was had to commissions of extraordinary judges under authority of the Parliament.†

It is curious to find the royal edict, in 1512, which restrained the power of the clergy of Rouen in the exercise of the privilege of St. Romain, stating that the said privilege shall not extend in future to the deliverance of criminals detained for crimes of heresy or high treason,‡ the publication of which edict was considered as a triumph of the civil authorities over the clergy of Rouen. In 1540, the attorney-general and the parliament declared that they would permit no prisoners accused of such crimes to be delivered, and threatened the clergy with a seizure of their possessions if they refused to accede to such modifications.

The epistle of Pope Innocent III. to the Archbishop of Narbonne and his suffragans expresses the spirit which animated the Church in all ages, with respect to the manner of correcting and receiving back those who had chosen a way unto themselves. "In order," says the pontiff, "to lead back souls deceived in many and various modes by diabolic fraud, to Him who is the way, and the truth, and the

* Ivoius Carnot. Epist. VII.

† Fleury, Instit. au Droit Ecclesiast. tom. ii. c. 9.

‡ Floquet, Hist. du Privilège de St. Rom. i. 213.

* Helmold, Chron. Slavor. Lib. i. c. 1.

† Bernardini Gomesii de Vit. Jacobi I. Lib. xiv.

life, we must bear with many things for a time, imitating what the apostle Paul styles his craft—meaning the prudence which dissembleth many things, after the example of him who feigned an intention to go farther, when he showed himself as a traveller to the two disciples. If any one should not instantly and wholly abandon his ancient customs, but should retain to himself some of them, either to spare shame, or perhaps through a desire, as it were, to bury with honour his ancient law, such a person is not to be altogether opposed and confuted, provided he doth not err in the substance of truth; for diversity of customs, especially in external habit, doth not deform the holy Church. Nevertheless, we do not say this to approve of such emulation, but that we may follow the example of Him who was made weak to the weak, yea, all things to all men, that he might gain all men to Him who wisheth all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of his truth. For, dearly beloved, is a physician to be blamed who sometimes indulgeth his patient in a thing less wholesome, through compliance with his great desire? Certainly not; since, although it be a little injurious in one respect, it may be very beneficial in another. Do you therefore, brethren, support such persons in a spirit of lenity, not repulsing, but attracting them; because the generality of men are more easily brought back by admonitions than by comminations; and some are more corrected by affability of grace than by asperity of discipline; for oil must first be poured in, and if it be required, wine also over it; and with converts of this kind, after the wine, oil again must be poured in.” And then he adds this remarkable sentence:—“Nevertheless, while intending to recall the erring from heretical depravity, we wish that the faithful may be cherished in Catholic truth; since it is more tolerable that the perverse should perish in their perversity, than that the just should decline from his justice.”*

Hurter remarks, that the epistles of this pontiff evince a deep knowledge of the human heart, and prove that he had caught the spirit of the gospel quite as well as the modern judges, who condemn him. Highly worthy of remark, in our times, are the letters which he addressed to the archbishops and their suffragans of the churches of Narbonne and Genoa, exhort-

ing them earnestly, and commanding them by apostolic rescript, not to permit his beloved sons, Durandus de Osca and Guilelmus of St. Antonio, with their associates that have been reconciled to ecclesiastical unity, after renouncing the heresy of the Waldenses, to be molested in any manner by any one, under pretence of their former error, but to cherish them benignly, as if young plants; since the art of those to whom the government of souls is confided ought to be such, that not only they may recall, by pastoral solicitude, those who have been led astray from the Lord's flock, but also cherish in the spirit of gentleness those who have been brought back to it; that while such persons may rejoice in experiencing the expected sweetness, others may be induced by their example to desert the error of their blindness.* To the archbishop and his suffragans of the church of Tarragona he writes to the same effect, charging them to assist these men mercifully on account of God, and to suffer no formalities to cause an impediment in the way of others who seek to return, lest those who seem to be drawn by divine grace should be repelled by their hardness from the infinite mercy of God.† He writes also to the Bishop of Marseilles, charging him to receive those convertites with benignity, and not to suffer them, on account of the note which they had contracted from their former conversation, to be rashly molested by any one, but to preserve them safe from all infamy and scandal, and to assist them mercifully with testimonials, and in every other manner, for the sake of God.‡

“If the blind, and the lame, and the weak, are to be not only invited to the marriage feast, but compelled to assist at it, much more are they not to be repelled from it who hasten to it, of their own accord: therefore he charges the bishop of Cremona not to suffer any one henceforward to calumniate Bernard and his companions, who had incurred the infamy of heresy, but who had humbly and devoutly repaired to the holy Roman Church to be restored to its communion; and by apostolic rescript he commands him to receive them as faithful men and true Catholics, walking with consent in the house of the Lord.”§

The instances of merciless persecution

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xiii. 63; Lib. xv. 94.

† Id. Epist. Lib. xiii. 78.

‡ Id. Lib. xv. 50.

§ Id. Lib. xv. 146.

* Inn. III. Epist. Lib. xii. 67.

and of undue severity which are to be found in the ecclesiastical annals, can all be traced to men who were, either unintentionally or with a full sense of their own position, at variance with the desire of the Church. A modern French writer, so little distinguished for partiality to the side of religion, that he seems always anxious to represent in odious colours the rulers of the Church, is obliged to admit, in speaking of the war against the Albigenses, that Pope Innocent III. lamented and wept for the blood which was shed, and even issued bulls of anathema against the perpetrators of cruelty; but the fact is, he says, that the people of Provence detested the French, and wished to establish themselves as a distinct nation: the heresy was but an accident, and the mere pretence for a war of ambition, of which the first and unavoidable cause was the action of the north upon the south, of the central power of France upon the little sovereignty of Toulouse, that desired to be independent.* This is his opinion; but Hurter, armed with far different erudition, though not a Catholic, has nobly vindicated Innocent from the calumnies of the moderns, as repeated by Sismondi.†

How admirable does this great pontiff appear, when he offers an asylum at the foot of his throne to the old Raymond of Toulouse, the ancient and inveterate enemy of Catholicism, and to his son—when he himself pleads their cause against the victorious crusaders, and, when after giving the most excellent advice to this young prince, and, in vain endeavouring to appease his conquerors, he assigns to him the comtat and Provence, in order that the innocent son of the guilty might not be left without patrimony! The children of the enemies of the Church experienced the benefit of his intervention. James of Aragon, whose father had been slain in fighting for the heretics, being made prisoner by the Catholic army, was liberated by order of Innocent.

Schoell is a writer whom no one can suspect of being inclined to favour the side of the Church; and yet, when speaking of these wars, he says, "One cannot absolve the Manichæans of France nor the Cathari from the reproach of an abominable fanaticism: they professed errors grievous and dangerous, which no government could

tolerate."* The latter explanation is more conformable to the fact. Their errors, as Pope Innocent said, were the more horrible, as not only attacking evangelic truth, but also the philosophic doctrine respecting the Creator of the universe.† We have the writings of Pierre de Vaux Sernai, a monk of Cîteaux, and of William of Pui-Laurent, chaplain to Raymond VII. count of Toulouse, who, as ocular witnesses, describe the execrable impieties and manners of the Albigenses, who literally fulfilled St. Paul's prediction, of men holding the doctrines of demons, speaking falsehood in hypocrisy. They comprised all known heresies, and having no chief from whom they could be traced, St. Bernard calls them a headless body. Armenia was for some time their central country, whence they began, at the end of the ninth century, to pervert the Bulgarians, then but recently converted to the faith. In the eleventh century, they passed into France, and King Henry I. committed many of them to the flames at Orleans. The horrors which they introduced into domestic life (for one of their tenets was to forbid marriage) may be learned from the letter which Raymond V., Count of Toulouse, wrote in 1177 to the general chapter of Cîteaux; and indeed, if other evidence were wanting to prove what was the nature of their opinions, the celebrated exclamation of St. Thomas, alluding to them, while dining at the table of St. Louis—"Conclusum est contra Manichæos"—would be enough to banish doubt from every mind that could justly appreciate the value of incidental testimony.

An anecdote related by an ancient author will serve to illustrate both the real character of these pretended martyrs, and the disposition of the clergy to treat them with greater mildness than the public opinion at the time deemed just. Guibert de Nogent relates that John, Count of Soissons, a man of horrible manners, and a close ally of Jews and heretics, used to utter nefarious words against the holy Saviour. "His blasphemies might be learned," continues the good abbot, "from the little book which I wrote against him at the entreaty of Bernard the dean; but as they were unutterable by a Christian mouth, and execrable to pious ears, we suppressed them. Yet at Christmas and during the Lord's passion, he showed him-

* Villemain, *Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age*.

† Hurter, *Geschichte Innocente III.*

* Schoell, *Cours d'Hist. des Etats Europ.* liv. v. c. 12.

† *Epist. Inn.* liv. x. 54.

self so humble, that you would scarcely think him perfidious. On the paschal night, he came to vigils in the church, and suggested to a certain religious clerk that he should say something to him on the mystery of those days. When he had spoken how the Lord suffered and rose again, the count replied, whistling with scorn, 'All fables—all so much wind!' 'If,' said the clerk, 'you count them to be fables, why do you watch here?' 'Oh,' said he, 'I am only waiting to see certain persons that come here.' For though he had a most beautiful young wife, he abandoned himself to shameful courses, and not even nuns were safe from his violence. At length, returning from the royal expedition, he was struck by the hand of death amidst the amours; and when he became alarmed, he inquired from a certain clerk what he thought of his disease; who proceeded to remind him of his licentious life, and bid him think of his soul; but he replied, 'You wish that I should give some money to the gluttonous priests?—Not an obol. I have learned from disreeter men than you that all women are common, and that this is a sin of no moment.' These were his last words; for, wishing to repel his wife, who stood at his side, with his foot, he overthrew with the blow a soldier who sat near; and so his hands were held down, till, wearied with struggling, he expired."

In fact, Clementius and Ebrard, at this time in the next town to Soissons, were leaders of this secret heresy, which held that the Christian dispensation was all a delusion; who annulled infant baptism, abhorred the sacrament of the altar, condemned marriage, recommended horrible vices, and practised the most atrocious profanations of the Eucharist. "So that," continues this holy abbot, "if you read St. Augustin, you will be convinced that what was formerly practised by more learned men has descended to the rustics, who, while they pretend to hold fast the apostolic life, embrace the system of the Manichæans."

Being summoned by the Bishop of Soissons, Lisiard, an illustrious man, and being asked why they wished to have another Church and become heretics, Clement answered, "Have you not read in the gospel, 'Beati eritis?'" for, being illiterate, he understood it as *hæreticos*; and he thought that heretics were so called, as hereditarii, doubtless, of God. The bishop had them exorcised; and Clement, to the infinite joy of the Church, was absolved,

though by a judgment only used in the secular courts.* The one who confessed his error and was impenitent, was with another, thrown into chains. The bishop went to the council of Beauvais, to consult with the other bishops what ought to be done; but in the mean time, the people, fearing the clerical softness, *clericalem verens mollitiem*, ran to the prison, led them out of the city, and burnt them.† But it was in the south of France that these errors had sunk the deepest. On the death of Raymond V., the good Count of Toulouse, his son and successor, Raymond VI., partly through policy and partly through congeniality of views and manners, favoured the Manichæans, and from that time the persecutions against the Catholics began. It is to be observed, that the infection spread with more rapidity among the great, into whose houses the heretics had introduced themselves; so that at the head of this war against the authority and doctrine of the Church appeared the Counts of Foix and of Comminge, the Viscount of Bearn, the Senechal of the King of England, who commanded in Aquitaine, and a number of gentlemen, under whose authority the teachers insulted all who remained constant. In general, the nobles of Guienne, Languedoc, and Provence, protected them either secretly or openly, and received from them the tithes which they refused to pay to the ministers of the altar. Such was the state of things when St. Dominick and Don Diego, bishop of Osma, arrived at Montpellier, where they found many Cistercian abbots who had been vainly labouring to recall these wanderers to the true fold. St. Dominick, the loving minion of the Christian faith, had already made a convert in the person of his host, who had received him to hospitality on his passage through Toulouse. Before commencing his missionary labours while in his retreat at Osma, where he began to have no other place of repose but the church, and no other bed but the steps of the altar, what he demanded of God with the greatest fervour was a perfect charity, by which he might be brought to the closest resemblance with the Saviour of the world. Then, having gained license to fight against an erring and degenerate world, with sage doctrine and good-will to help, as Dante says, forth on his great

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xiv. 138.

† Guibert de Novigent, de Vita Propria, Lib. iii. 16.

apostleship he fared, like torrent bursting from a lofty vein, and dashing against the stocks of heresy, smote fiercest where resistance was most stout. His first measure was to lay down solemn rules to guide the missionary labours. He showed that persuasion and example were to be the only weapons employed, that they were to tread in the steps of the apostles, to preach and live like them, to go about on foot, without money, opposing to the depths of Satan and to the pride of heresy, only the humility and the patience of God; for that only, by so doing, they could hope to reform by degrees the manners of the clergy, confound the hypocrisy of the heretics, and guard the faithful against their seductions. The legate approved of these proposals in the assembly of Montpellier, and declared that this rule was to be henceforth obligatory on all missionaries. Thus began, in 1206, the ten years which St. Dominick employed in combating the Albigenses, until the fourth council of Lateran. With no other aid but what he expected from heaven, with no other sword but the word of God, he fearlessly devoted himself to preach through all these regions amidst a ferocious population and a corrupt nobility, interested in the success of the revolt. He had already made innumerable conversions among the poor, when Raymond VI., refusing to give security to his Catholic subjects, by withdrawing his protection from the enemies of faith, was excommunicated by Peter de Castelnau, legate of the holy see. The sentence was soon revoked; a conference was proposed and accepted; the legate and the count met at St. Gilles; but as Raymond was evidently only deceiving the ecclesiastical authority, and seeking to gain time for his manœuvres, the latter withdrew, though threatened, for so doing, in such a manner, that the consuls and citizens, fearing what might happen, sent officers to protect his person as far as the banks of the Rhone, where he passed the night in a hostel; but the next morning, after offering the holy mysteries, as he proposed to cross the river, a servant of the count, who had followed him and slept in the same hostel that night, approached and assassinated him, and then fled back to his master.

Our limits do not admit of my describing the sufferings of St. Dominick, and the heroic patience with which he laboured to save this perishing people. The Catholic ecclesiastics were now driven from their Churches; landed proprietors were obliged

to fly with their families, and to ask their bread from door to door; bands of armed men, to the number of from six to eight thousand, ravaged the plains, committing atrocities hardly conceivable. Philip Augustus defeated and slew ten thousand of them, in Berry; but while he drove them out of his states, they were received into those of Raymond VI. Such was the origin of the crusade that was preached against them; but it is an error to suppose that the Inquisition commenced at this time; for the Albigenses were open enemies, defending their cause by force of arms. St. Dominick only laboured in preaching, and disputing, and absolving sinners—in *omni patientia et doctrina*. The very guides, who were treacherously conducting him through false ways, were converted by the spectacle of his patience. His arms were a chaplet; for it was at this epoch that he formed the rosary into a regular devotion, in order to lead the people from vain disputations to meditation with prayer, on the mysteries of the Man-God. The contemporary writers, who describe all his actions in such minute detail, make no mention whatever of his having been present either at the slaughter on the storming of Beziers, or at the great victory at Muret, where Simon de Montfort defeated the combined army amounting to 100,000 men, of the King of Aragon, and of the Counts of Foix and Toulouse. The crucifix pierced with arrows, which is shown at Toulouse as having been carried by him on the latter occasion, cannot therefore be admitted as evidence. The ancient writers, on the contrary, attest that he remained during the whole of that time in the church, at prayer. His example was followed by many who had engaged in this warfare. Suera Gomez had left the court of Don Sancho I. king of Portugal, in 1208, to join the army of the crusaders in Languedoc, proposing nothing else but to bear arms in defence of the Church; but being moved by the sermons or conversation of the apostolic man, he resolved ever afterwards to walk in his footsteps; and he deserved to be reckoned among the sixteen first who embraced the order of preachers. Moreover, Tournon proves against the Bollandists, that St. Dominick never took part in the rigorous judgments pronounced against the heretics. It is not the question whether he had the right or not to deliver to the secular arm those who refused to abjure, but it is a matter of fact that he never did deliver any one to

the secular arm ; but, on the contrary, that he delivered some from it. An abbot of Citeaux, with three of his monks, had been seized at a quarter of a league from Carcassone, by Guillaume de Rochefort, an ardent persecutor of the Catholics. The abbot and one of the monks was slain, a third dangerously wounded, and the fourth escaped. The crusaders, in the first moments of exasperation, condemned some of the Manichæans to the flames if they refused to retract. As they were leading them to the stake, St. Dominick presented himself, and implored pardon for the youngest, Raymond de Grossi, who obtained it, though obstinate in his error. From these scenes of violence the man of peace and mercy withdrew into Italy, meditating more durable and efficacious means of correcting the evil, and more conformable to the religion of the Son of God. At Rome he obtained the approval of the new order which was to revive the sacerdotal spirit among the clergy, to send preachers through all lands, and to win back, by sanctity of life, by wisdom of discourse, by mercy and moderation of conduct, those who had been enticed from the ways of truth and holiness.*

Such was this spirit of the great apostle of the thirteenth century, the hallowed wrestler, gentle to his own, and to his enemies terrible !—that is, as the Mother of Christ is terrible, and not otherwise ; for his zeal was that which comes from God, that which is the perfection of love, which makes blessed saints whom Christ appoints to be his helpmates—that of which the angelic doctor says “*Quælibet parva quæ viderit corrigere satagit ; si nequit, tolerat et gemit.*”† It was a zeal always regulated by the light of God, conducted by his Spirit, accompanied by wisdom, sweetness, and a compassionate charity for the men whose errors it combated, preaching by word and by example the renouncement of every thing calculated to incline the heart to cruelty or accustom it to view with indifference the danger or suffering of others. “Who doubts,” says Louis of Grenada, “that this spirit of charity, this ardent desire of the glory of God and of the salvation of men, is the first and best master of the art of preaching?”‡

When the holy Dominick first came to

Montpellier, pious abbots, holy prelates, apostolic legates, who had toiled for a long time in vain, were returning from that ungrateful vineyard, saying with an ancient prophet, “We sought to heal Babylon, and she would not be healed ! Let us abandon her ; let each one return to his country.” Without blaming their resolution, who must not admire the persevering zeal of the Spanish missionary, hoping against hope, exhorting them in season and out of season, waiting with patience for God’s time, and resolving never to cease but with life labouring for their salvation ; enduring all things, as if to him alone these words had been addressed, “God has given his life for us, and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren ?”

It was not, however, alone in the penalties exercised against these desperate men, that examples of the encroachments of the secular court and of the popular power upon the ecclesiastical jurisdiction can be found. There are many instances which, at a different epoch, bear testimony to the same fact.

The year 1317 beheld a deed of horror, when Hugues Gerard, bishop of Cahors, for having sought by enchantments to shorten the life of Pope John XXII., and for many other crimes, was deposed, degraded, and condemned to do penance for the rest of his days in prison. This was the ecclesiastical sentence ; but Bernard Guido, a contemporary author, relates that after his deposition and degradation the secular court seized upon him, and by its decree he was committed to the flames.* A more remarkable instance was the punishment of the knights Templars. Nicolaus de Freaville, a learned Dominican, and one of the most sublime preachers of his time, was appointed, along with two other cardinals, by Pope Clement V., to terminate their cause ; and Tournon relates that all the credit of these three cardinals was exerted to save Jacques de Molay and his companions from the punishment to which the king condemned them, and which, in spite of the ecclesiastical remonstrance, he made them suffer on the same day.†

We have before had occasion to remark, in general, as an historical fact, that in proportion as men adopted principles and

* Tournon, Vie de S. Dom.

† S. Thom. I, 2, Q. 28, A. 4.

‡ Rethor. de l’Eglise, i. 10.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l’Ord. de S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 11.

† Id. tom. ii. liv. 9.

views that had a tendency to withdraw them from a close connection with the holy see, their notions of discipline became more rigid, and their administrative proceedings more severe. In France, wherever we find a disposition to recommend the exercise of a violent zeal, in the civil power, to repress offences against religion, and to approve of acts which had been deemed too rigorous by the Popes, we shall be sure to find, in the same person, the praise of Gallican liberties and of French, in opposition to Ultramontane theologians. The sentence against Savonarola at Florence, and his horrible doom, were levelled rather in defiance than in defence of religion. The infamy of his death is shared by some of the magistrates, and by Ludovicus Sforza. On being degraded, the sentence was read aloud; and when he heard the words that he was cut off "ab ecclesia"—"Militante" was his immediate reply, which was his last word.—"A proud answer, in my judgment," remarks Petrus Delphinus, who, in the judgment of others, perhaps, would have appeared wiser had he held his peace rather than divulged it.*

Such was the horror inspired by his death in the noble race of Est, so celebrated for its fidelity in all times to the holy see, that Hercules of that blood, Duke of Ferrara, sent to the gallows a poet who had insulted his memory in certain vile calumnious songs which he composed after his execution, and he loudly complained to the magistrates of Florence for granting impunity to those who repeated them.

The origin of capital punishment against heretics was not from ecclesiastical power, but from the temporal princes, as may be seen in the codes of Justinian and Theodosius, under the title "De Hæreticis." The third council of Lateran declared against it in the twenty-seventh canon, saying, "Ecclesiasticam disciplinam, sacerdotali contentam judicio, cruentas non efficere ultiones."

With respect to the jealousy and suspicion excited in so many breasts whenever the name of the Inquisition is pronounced, there are many reflections suggested by history, which should at least stop the mouths of passionate declaimers; as for instance, when it records the fact, that the Inquisition in France was established by Pope Alexander IV. at the prayer of St. Louis. In his constitution concerning heretics, he charges his barons, and all persons in authority,

to bring heretics before the ecclesiastical tribunals, that in their presence such persons being condemned, all hatred, interest, bribery, fear, favour, and affection, being set aside, they may proceed to fulfil their duty respecting them.* We find that the holy see has in all ages been constrained to consent and give sanction to measures at the prayer of local authorities, whether civil or ecclesiastical, in distant countries, which might be thought injurious to the interests of her own discipline; and how unjust is it to forget this when she is obliged similarly to consent to reprehensible measures proposed by the civil power, which may have an air of being designed to favour them? In Portugal the majority of the officers of the Inquisition are laymen, and the duty of ecclesiastics in regard to it is little more than to act as members of a court of inquiry into the nature of books intended for general circulation, and the tendency of opinions. The English writer who published *Letters to Osorius* remarks, that "it sprung from imperious necessity, and owes its origin to the great principle of self-defence; and that it has saved society in these countries from numberless evils: of which fact the good and peaceable are so well aware, that when a desperate faction, assuming the sacred name of liberty, had obtained its destruction, the great body of the people was clamorous for its re-establishment." Bourgoign is an author who can hardly be suspected of favouring whatever bears the appearance of an ecclesiastical sanction, and therefore, I shall cite his words with the more courage: "The fact is," saith he, "the tribunal of the Inquisition, as I said in 1789, and I repeat it, in spite of the critics, for the fourth time in 1805, is not near so fearful a thing as one imagines in foreign countries. I confess that its forms are calculated to alarm those who would reckon upon its equity, though these include the previous act of three private admonitions, to refrain from giving public scandal, attention to which would stop all further proceedings. Without undertaking the task, so replete with odium, of making its apology, I must confess also, in order to render homage to truth, that if one can pardon its forms and object, the Inquisition might be cited in our days as a model of justice; and after all, the truth is, that, with a little circumspection as to religion, one can live as tran-

* Annal. Camaldul. Lib. lxxviii.

* Ap. Duchesne, Hist. Franc. Script. V.

quilly in Spain as in any other country of Europe."*

Writers on the canon law have shown the falsehood of the opinion that thoughts were judged by the Inquisition as by men who have the power of confessors: for as the church by itself directly could not prohibit an act merely internal, so it could not inflict a censure upon a heresy which was not developed manifestly by the exterior act. The Inquisition took cognizance only of Catholics, and of those who laboured to pervert them. It passed over Jews and all persons born in heresy or schism, who were tolerated by the state.† There are, at all events, several modern readers who require to be reminded, if not apprized, that the clergy were as much the objects of the attention of the Inquisition, as the laity, of which there can be no more striking instance cited in proof than the arrest of Bartholomew de Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain in the year 1559, when he was imprisoned at Valladolid, whose subsequent history can of itself throw great light on the real nature of that institution. Neither the church of Toledo, nor the fathers of the council then assembled at Trent, nor even the Holy See, were able to prevent this national, and we may add, in a great measure, laical tribunal, from keeping a pious and learned prelate seven years in captivity; and nothing short of the inflexible firmness and courage of Pope Pius V. at the representation of the apostolic commissioners who had been sent into Spain, was able to overcome its resolution not to have the cause transferred out of the dominions of the Catholic king. Even after the removal of the Primate to Rome, so many obstacles were thrown in the way of coming to a decision by the authorities in Spain, who persisted in affirming that the king's majesty was called in question by this appeal, that it was not till after some years he could be absolved, and but shortly before his holy death.‡

Let us relieve this dark subject by exhibiting mercy contrasted with the most severe forms of human severity. Let us enter the prison of Sixtus, of Sienna. This learned man, born of Jewish parents, had been induced in youth to embrace the Christian religion; but having subsequently contracted various errors contrary to faith, which he

successively renounced and repeated, was a second time arrested, tried, and condemned to death, as having relapsed to heresy, after a formal abjuration. At this time Michael Gislheri, who was afterwards Pope Pius V. filled the office of commissioner general of the Inquisition, and being a man of mercy, it was one of his constant practices to visit prisoners, with the view of consoling them, and moving them to repentance. The situation of Sixtus excited his deepest compassion; and he desired ardently to save him, notwithstanding his apparent obstinacy, and the inflexible rigour of the law, to which he had become amenable. The holy friar redoubled his prayers and his visits, and at length, by long conversations, succeeded in working a complete change in that diseased mind. His next step was to repair to the Pope, Julius III., throw himself at his feet, and implore pardon for the prisoner, who not only obtained his liberty, but even permission to enter the order of St. Dominic.

The Dedicatory Epistle prefixed to his *Bibliotheca Sancta*, which he presented to Pius V. in 1566, contains an affecting allusion to this deliverance. "Under your auspices," he says, "most holy father, I have dared to place this book, since it was you who formerly drew me from the gates of hell, to render me to the light of truth, and to a more perfect state. When you deigned to receive me into your order, you clothed me with your own hands and with your own habits. You adopted me then as your spiritual son. Oh, with what goodness, with what sweetness, with what liberality, have you always treated me, ever loading me with new favours in this celebrated order. Certainly I should be very ungrateful if I did not glory in confessing publicly that your kindness to me exceeds what I can express, and that there is no man on earth to whom I am more indebted than to you."*

The only comment, perhaps, on this narrative, will be to cry, "But how can an inquisitor be styled a man of mercy?" It skilfully not citing historic facts where sounds can awaken deep-rooted aversion; but let an English Protestant be heard attesting what he saw. "Those who expect to see the grand Inquisitor of Portugal a doleful figure, with eyes of reproof and malediction, would be disappointed," says the author of *Vathek*; "a pleasanter or more honest countenance than that kind heaven has blessed him with,

* *Tableau de l'Espagne*, vol. i. p. 392—5.

† *Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. iv. tit. viii.*

‡ *Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv.*

* *Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv.*

one has seldom the comfort of looking upon." At Madrid he sees the prelate who fills the same office in Spain, and he says, "that he has not only the look, but the character of beneficence." If after this he could have been prevailed on to look into the history of such men, he would have had the difficulty explained, without injury to the science of Lavater.

Touron, the historian of the Dominican order, in recording the lives of Vincent of Lisbon, Gui Maramaldi of Naples, and of other friars who had to discharge the painful office of Inquisitors, takes care to remark, that it was not so much by the fear of punishment as by persuasion, learning, and charity, that they provided against the contagion of heresy. Preaching and sanctity of life were the only weapons used in converting the Moors, Turks, and heretics, by men whom religion authorized, and of whom the Church approved. You speak of intolerance; I can only see the pious and indefatigable labours of men devoted to the study of oriental languages and to preaching. "The poniard of faith," used by Raymond des Martins, the Dominican of Barcelona, with which he converts the Jews and Sarassins, turning their own arms against themselves, is very different from the sword of the magistrate, or the bayonets of the military. It was with his Apology for the Christian Religion, written in Arabic, that Philip Guadagnolus, of Malleano, gained such triumphs over the Mahometans, to which Pompeius Sarnellius alludes in the verses which he prefixed to the Italian version:

*I Liber felix, nova monstra questus,
Ut leves omni populos timore,
Nec sinas hostes fidei per orbem
Pergere inultos.*

*Non venenatis grvida sagittis
Indiges Mauri pharetra, nec arcu,
Est potis fortes calamus Philippi
Frangere turmas.*

*Quot tibi cedent, monitis nefandi
Qui fidem præstant Mahometis, omnes
Namque vincentur, secuturi ovantes
Dogmata Christi.**

Hear how William of Tripoli speaks in the conclusion of his great work against the Koran. "Thus, without the terror of material arms, by the sole virtue of the word of God, we have seen the Sarassins in great numbers present themselves to demand the

baptism of Jesus Christ. He who attests this fact has already received into the fold of the good pastor more than a thousand docile sheep, by the grace of God, to whom alone belong praise and glory for evermore."*

What a contrast between the barbarous intolerance of men in modern times, who hold out force and political subjection as their best logic, and the wondrous union of charity and erudition which distinguished the propagators of the Catholic faith in Spain during the middle ages! Behold St. Thomas of Aquin writing his immortal work *Contra Gentes* at the prayer of St. Raymond de Pegnafort, for the purpose of enabling the missionaries to convert the Moors. Behold the Kings of Arragon and Castile founding two colleges for Dominicans, one at Tunis, and the other in Murcia, for the same purpose. What can be more noble than the respect for the dignity and liberty of the human mind, which such acts as these display? Accordingly we find the Moorish princes, and the king of Tunis in particular, desiring the friendship of St. Raymond, who replies with all benignity to their advances, and avails himself of their favour to preach Jesus Christ. Writing to Father Humbert, the fifth general of his order, he assures him, that already 10,000 Sarassins had implored the grace of baptism. When were mercy and mildness beheld, if they were not in his conduct to the Jews and Mahometans, who sought instruction, to whom he acted the part of a father, providing even for their corporal necessities with great alms? If James I. at length published an edict, which banished from his dominions all who adhered to the Koran and to the Talmud, it was believed that necessity required that measure, so frightful was the corruption which the contagion of their manners had caused among the people. For the same reason St. Raymond advised him to establish the Inquisition, to prevent the heresy of the Manichæans from contaminating the whole nation; and let it be remembered, that this was the man of mercy, who at an age exceeding eighty years, travelled from Spain to Rome, in order to persuade Alexander IV. to pardon Manfred, who had usurped Sicily.

By referring to the secular arm, the Church did not sanction the acts which sometimes followed. "Since the heretics cannot be restrained by milder courses,

* Mutii Phæbonii Hist. Marsorum, Lib. iii. 6. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. i. 3.

what remains," says Leo the Great, "to prevent them from destroying others, but to subject them to the more tenacious bonds of the secular laws, yet in such a manner as not to violate the ecclesiastical mildness."* Even in much later times a demand for that intervention did not imply a desire to have the penalties of the secular courts inflicted, as is evident from the terms of the brief addressed to St. Peter of Verona, and Vivian of Bergamo, by the Pope Innocent IV. after the death of Frederick II. charging them to repair to the bishop's diocesan synod at Cremona, and to labour to extirpate the Manichæan heresy; for the words in conclusion are these: "Against those who will not submit to the orders of the Church, you will proceed according to the canons, imploring, if it be necessary, the succour of the secular arm:" similar to that passage, in which St. Bernard, calling upon Suger, as "a great prince in the kingdom," to oppose certain evils by force, adds, "*vim autem appello, quod ad ecclesiasticam pertinet disciplinam.*"† In fact, at that time the office of Inquisitor was one of protection and defence, and not of aggression. In many places, as at Gaoche, a town near Bergamo, the influence of the Manichæans was such, that the inhabitants durst not make open profession of the Catholic faith; and whoever ventured to preach it to them, had every reason to expect the fate of St. Peter Martyr, whose assassination they procured with the sum of forty Milanese franks. The persons against whom the Inquisitors of the faith in Italy had to act, were in general formidable men, invested with authority under the protection of such princes as Frederick II. and the tyrant Eccelino; the latter of whom was the declared friend of the Manichæans: to send one who should cite him before the Pope, was like sending a man to death. Yet Innocent IV. found a person ready to execute this commission, through the sole motive of the glory of God. Roland of Cremona was the friar who was deputed, in 1244, to discharge this perilous office; and he performed it with unflinching courage. The office of defending the faith in the northern countries, required the same intrepidity, and was discharged in the same spirit of mercy and moderation. How great was the benignity of John Nyder, the Dominican and Papal Nuncio, who was deputed by the Council of Basle to treat with the Hussites! It was such that even the chiefs

of that sect esteemed him, and admitted him to enter into communication with them. But when Divine Providence permitted that these men, who were drunk with the blood of the saints, should meet with a sanguinary punishment from the hands of Mainard de Neuhaux, a gentleman of Bohemia, Nyder and the ecclesiastical authority had neither advised such measures, nor could they have prevented their occurrence.* It is a great mistake to suppose, that in using the weapons of true Christian warfare, the zeal of theologians who defended the faith rendered them, in the estimation of their contemporaries, merciless men. In the fifteenth century it was the part of mercy to protect the people from the ruin which threatened the dearest interests of the human race, not excluding assuredly, the material condition of the poor.

Sauctes Pagninus, of Lucca, a learned Dominican friar, having died in the convent at Lyons, where he had been for some years residing, was followed to his grave by nearly the whole population of that city. More than 300 of the principal citizens walked, carrying flambeaux, and the grief appeared general. Roter happened to be at Lyons at that time, and having asked what was the reason why such extraordinary honours were paid to the deceased, he was told that the citizens ascribed the preservation of their faith, in a great measure, to his zeal; for, they said, if that learned friar had not raised his voice like a trumpet, to warn the people of the danger which threatened them, perhaps at that day the whole city would have professed itself Lutheran.†

The zeal of Pius V. in repressing public immoralities, had rendered him formidable to the profligate; many of whom came with the faithful to behold his body exposed after death in the church of St. Peter, and could not conceal their joy on being delivered from such an enemy; yet we are told the sight of his countenance, though the pale hand of death lay on it, produced such an effect upon many sinners, that from that hour they renounced the ways of vice.

With respect to the toleration of other religions in a Catholic state, the fact is, that whatever political evil might be apprehended, the measures taken against them were adopted by the will of the temporal magistrate, and not by the suggestions of the ecclesiastical authority. The words of the hymn for the vespers of all saints—

* Epist. xciii.

† Epist. cclxxvi.

* Touron, tom. iii.

+ Id. tom. iv. liv. xxv.

auferte gentem perfidam credentium de finibus—were composed in reference to the invasion of the Normans, who then threatened the extirpation of the Christian religion. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvois' Mirror, who at all events was deeply instructed in the discipline and doctrine of the Church, even says expressly, that "the rites of infidels may be tolerated by human government; for as human government must imitate the divine government, and we see that the omnipotent God tolerates many evils which he might destroy, lest worse should follow; so also must the human government permit evils to exist, lest, by removing them, he should injure the good, or create worse evil."* The Church herself showed the example; in allusion to which Ives de Chartres says to Hugo, Archbishop of Lyons: "If you wish to collect examples from past and present time, we shall find that the princes of the Church have been accustomed to tolerate many things for the necessity of the times, and to dissemble many things for the utility of persons.† In this sense the profound words of Æschylus expressed a maxim, which has ever guided the rulers of the Catholic Church. "God hath given the chief strength to all mediums; but He regards other things, that is, things immoderate, with an eye without medium."

Παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος
Θεὸς ὥπασεν, ἀλλὰ
"Ἄλλα δ' ἄλλ' ἐφορεῖται."

The heathens had a saying, "he who hates vices must hate men; qui vitia odit, homines odit."§ But the Catholic philosophy knew of no such dilemma. "Let the ruler and magistrate remember," says Louis of Blois, "that he cannot please God if he hate any man; therefore he must pity sinners, while he does not favour sins: let him punish vices, not men; and let him not repeat the faults of men to others, where he cannot hope to make them, or those who hear him, better; let him love, with sincere affection of heart, the man whose imperfections and negligences he punishes; and let him show towards him a serene countenance, and a desire of comforting him in words and actions; but let him never dissemble the injury done to God, and religion, and the soul, on

account of human friendship."* How pernicious were the errors of Abailard, and yet the abbot William, in the very letter in which he excites St. Bernard and the Bishop of Chartres to protect the Church of God against their infections, speaks of their author in these terms: "Dilexi et ego eum, et diligere vellem, Deus testis est; sed in causa hac nemo umquam proximus mihi erit, vel amicus."†

With respect to the Jews, who were an object of popular detestation, on account of their usurious iniquities, and oppression of the poor, the conduct of the church and of ministers was such as to extort the admiration even of her most bitter enemies. It is true, we find in early times several decrees to secure a separation between the Jews and Christians, and certain measures enjoined against them for this purpose. In the year 1337 a council of three provinces, in the monastery of St. Rufus, near Avignon, decreed that no Christian should keep any servant or maid of the Jewish sect. All Jews were to wear upon their breast the figure of a wheel, and Christians were not to contract marriage with them.‡ At Bologna, in 1417, the Jews, whose usuries were restrained the following year, were ordered to wear a leaden mark upon their breasts, and to close their shops on festivals.§ St. Vincent Ferrier obtained from Don John II. King of Castile, an edict to oblige the Jews and Moors to bear some particular mark to distinguish them from Christians, because he had observed the injurious moral effects of their intercourse with the Christians, especially with those that had been recently converted.||

Without believing that the Jews were guilty of all the crimes of which they were accused in different countries, no doubt often merely in consequence of the alarmed imagination of the people, it is incontestable that, on some occasions, they were justly convicted of shedding Christians' blood, through hatred of Jesus Christ. The murder of the little Simon, for instance, in the city of Trent, by three Jewish Rabbins, on the night preceding Good Friday, in 1476, was judicially examined, and verified by the jurisconsult, John Sala, whom the money of the Jews could not corrupt. It was on this

* Ludovic. Bos. Enchirid. Parvulorum, Lib. i. doc. x. Append.

† Epist. St. Bern. cccxxvi.

‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 81.

§ Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. liv. iv.

|| Tourn. Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 17.

* Vincent. Bellovacensis, Speculum Morale, Lib. iii. pars iii. dis. 29.

† Ivoius Carnot, Epist. lv.

‡ Eumenid. 529.

§ Plin. Epist. viii. 22.

occasion that Leonard de Perugia, General of the Dominicans, wrote to many superiors of his order, in different countries, not to animate them against the Jews, but to desire that they should prevail on the rich, by giving liberal alms, to preserve poor Christians from the temptation of offering themselves as servants in Jewish families.* Pope Innocent III. might well ordain, through the council, that on the day when all Christendom celebrated the passion of the Lord, the Jews should not openly show themselves, lest the minds of the people should be inflamed against them. Independent of all these considerations one cannot be surprised at the enmity which was evinced by the people towards the Jews, when we consider, that besides the nature of their position relative to the mysteries of faith, they were the ministers of oppressors, and professed usurers. The bishop of Auxerre informed Pope Innocent III. that no one durst appear as an accuser against the manifest usurers in his diocese, through fear of the princes and great men who protected them.† No Christian witness, however unexceptionable, could appear against them. Many secular princes appointed Jews to be their ministers of exaction upon the poor widows and orphans who were despoiled of their inheritance, while the Jews took possession of castles and villas. To correct these evils the Pontiff wrote to the Count of Nevers, saying, "Blasphemers of the Christian name ought not to be cherished by Christian princes for the oppression of the Lord's servants."‡ Nevertheless, he judged it necessary to mitigate the decree of the Lateran Council against usurers, on the ground that where there would be much correction required, there should be a relaxation of severity.§ By his command, however, those who undertook to fight for fraternal defence against the cruel enemies of the Church in the south of France were to be absolved by the Jews from their payment of usurious debts, and delivered from further exaction;|| and the same benefit was to be granted to the Crusaders who departed for the Holy Land.¶ The usurious gains of the Jews are described by Peter the Venerable.**

Hear how Barabas speaks of himself in Marlowe's tragedy of the Jew of Malta.—

"Then after that was I an usurer,
And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,
And tricks belonging unto brokery,
I fill'd the jails with bankrupts in a year,
And with young orphans planted hospitals;
And every moon made some or other mad;
And now and then one hung himself for grief,
Pinning upon his breast a long, great scroll
How I with interest tormented him.
But mark how I am blest for plaguing them:
I have as much coin as will buy the town.
I have been zealous in the Jewish faith,
Headhearted to the poor, a covetous wretch,
That would, for lucre's sake, have sold my
soul.

A hundred for a hundred I have ta'en;
And now for store of wealth may I compare
With all the Jews in Malta."

If you will believe the ancient historians, this is not an exaggerated picture. "The first Jew that came to fix his residence in Nola," says Ambrose Leo, in his account of that city, "was Vilielmus, a surgeon and physician, who arrived there in 1440. Our old people say that he was then a poor man in tattered raiment, only rags stitched together; and that when it was known a Jew had arrived, the whole city was moved, and the inhabitants went about looking for him, as if they expected to see one of those who had fixed our Lord Jesus on the cross. He had not been long there, when others of his tribe arrived, and, by degrees, as many as twenty houses were occupied by Jews. The usury they practised was so great, that the interest used to equal the principal in a short time: they acquired all sorts of precious objects of art in this manner, and became possessed of immenseriches. Vilielmus, now an old man, purchased great houses in the Via Vincanciana, and a farm at the Tower Martiana. But they inhabited Nola only seventy years; for in 1509, they were expelled from all Campania and Calabria."* The statute of St. Louis, concerning the Jews, declares that for the salvation of his soul, and for that of his father, King Lewis, he has decreed, with the common council of his barons, that they will in future contract no debts with the Jews, and that those already contracted shall be paid off at three specified periods.† Philippe de Valois banished the Jews from France, to get rid of his own debt, which, in a very short time, mounted from 400,000 francs to two millions. In the thirteenth century, they had obtained enormous riches, by the exercise of a most shameless traffic, impoverishing the Christians, and encouraging sacrilegious persons,

* Ambros. Leonis de Nola, liv. iii. c. iv. in *Theaur. Antiq. Ital.* ix.

† Ap. Duchesne *Hist. Franc. Script.* tom. v.

* Touron, tom. iii. liv. xxii.

† Inn. III. Epist. Lib. x. 61.

‡ Epist. Lib. x. 190.

§ Inn. III. Epist. liv. xi. 62.

|| Id. 158, 159.

¶ Id. liv. xi. 185.

** Epist. Lib. iv. 36. *Bibliothec. Cluniac.*

as in times of less ancient date, only their measures were then conducted in secret, and not under the sanction of governments, by means of mercenary armies. Peter the Venerable relates, that they used to encourage persons to steal for them the precious and sacred vessels and ornaments of the churches, in order that they might apply them to the basest purposes.

Jews, on their conversion, have confessed that they used to employ their Christian servants, whom they had perverted, to bring secretly from the Church the blessed Eucharist.* Relying on the protection of the secular princes, whose hearts they seduced by gifts, the Jews, in the thirteenth century, treated the Christian people with scorn and defiance. By command of the princes, the butchers used to deliver their animals to be killed by the Jews, according to their rite, giving them the first choice of the meat, and reserving the residue for the Christians. The milk which was sold for nourishing children, was similarly made to pass first through their hands. At the vintage, the Jew, according to his rite, pressed out the purest juice of the grape, which he retained for himself, leaving the rest, as if contaminated, for the faithful, and to serve for the sacrament of the blood of Christ.† In the time of Pius V., it was proved that the Jews furnished facility to thieves and robbers, by receiving the goods which they stole; that they used to introduce immorality into families, by tampering with the domestics; and propagate superstition among the people, by pretending to practise magic. By Pius V. they were ordered to leave the ecclesiastical states, with the exception of two cities, and this was deemed an act of necessity; the protection of the people requiring it.‡ In Ancona, and in Rome itself, they were permitted to remain in a quarter appropriated to themselves. At Florence, as soon as four mounts of piety were established, with the alms collected after the sermons of Jerome Savonarola, the magistrates banished the Jewish usurers from the city.§ In France there is a remarkable example of the same policy furnished by Humbert II. in the fourteenth century, the last of the dauphins, and one of the best and most merciful of men, who delivered his subjects from many ancient burdens, and had, at first, after the example of his pre-

decessors, permitted the Jews to exercise their commerce in his states, on condition of their paying him certain subsidies; but experience having convinced him that these leeches would have drained the people by their usuries, he revoked the permission, and abolished their privileges, preferring to lose the revenue which he drew from them, than suffer the ruin of his subjects.* The laws of the Visigoths against the Jews in Spain were certainly most severe;† and the act of Ferdinand and Isabella, which put an end to their interference in the affairs of that kingdom until within the last three years, was blamed by many contemporary writers; yet it should be remarked, that the communication with the professed Jews, and the pretended Christians, had been proved to be not only injurious to the weak in faith, but also, at that particular moment, highly dangerous to the state. It was in consequence of their maintaining secret intelligence with the Moors, and of their avowed detestation of the Christians, that Thomas de Torquemada advised Ferdinand and Isabella to order all the Jews who would not embrace the faith to leave Castile and Arragon within four months, granting them permission to dispose of their property, and to carry away with them whatever they possessed; so that, at least, it was a disinterested policy, considering the prodigious quantity of gold and silver, jewels and precious merchandize which they carried with them out of Spain; and, methinks, the vengeance which they are likely to take in our days, is enough to make the most ardent champions of toleration relax a little in their outcry in regard to it.

Whatever may be thought of these acts of government, we ought to recollect, that they were only in conformity with the voice of the people; and that, in later times, where the Catholic religion had been renounced, they were called for still by the people, as measures necessary for their own protection. Among the demands of the Lutheran peasants of the Rhingaw, when they rose in revolt, one was, that lodging should be refused to the Jews, on account of their unworthy usuries.‡ Nevertheless, the conduct of the Church towards the Jews was at all times characterized by the same spirit of wisdom and mercy, furnishing an admirable contrast to that of the secular princes, who were alternately their

* Inn. III. Epist. liv. xvi. c. lxxxiv.

† Id. Epist. Lib. x. c. cxc.

‡ Hieron. Rubet Hist. Ravenn. liv. xi.

§ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 23.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

† Leg. Visigothorum, Lib. ix.

‡ Gnodalins apud Schardt, Rerum Ger. Script. tom. ii. 142-3.

slaves and their persecutors. As Hurter remarks, the relation of the Israelites with the Christians, amongst whom they lived, was not certainly influenced by that false philanthropy which represents, as synonymous, persecution and the determination to preserve the Christianity of a state; but neither was it deserving of censure, on the ground of intolerance. Pope Innocent III. declared, that Christian piety was bound to admit and sustain the presence of the Jews;* and that it was well pleasing to God, that the dispersed Jewish people should find a habitation under Christian princes, who, through Judah and Israel, were to be blest.† In this spirit, was the constitution of the same pontiff, when the Jews applied to him for protection; in which he said, "Although they persist in their obduracy, since they ask for the assistance of our defence, we, according to the mildness of Christian piety, and following in the steps of our predecessors of happy memory, Calixtus, Eugene, Alexander, Clement, and Celestin, admit their petition, and grant them the shield of our protection. We decree that no Christian shall constrain them to apply for baptism, or injure either their persons or goods, or change the customs of the region which they inhabit, to their prejudice. Let no one insult them in the celebration of their festivals; and to obviate the depravity and avarice of men, we decree, that no one must dare to mutilate or diminish their cemeteries, or ransack their tombs in search of money, under pain of excommunication."‡ All persecution against the Jews was foreign to the Church. Innocent II. had shown a most benign disposition towards them, Alexander III. had restrained the passion of the people, and Gregory IX. raised his voice with energy against the violent and cruel deeds of the crusaders against them. All the bishops and doctors of the Church followed in these footsteps. The bishop of Beziers procured the abolition of a barbarous custom to despise the Jews, that had been annually observed; and long before his time, the prelates of Spain, with great applause from the contemporary pope, had come forward to protect the Jews against the violence of kings and people.§ Alluding to one persecution directed against them, Trithemius, the Benedictine, says, "I know that this displeased greatly the Roman pontiff, a man most Christian; for he knew that the charges against them, of

poisoning the wells, was incredible, as supposing a thing impossible; and many thought, that the Christians who moved this persecution were actuated by avarice, and not by piety.*

Albert of Aix says, that God punished the first crusaders for the cruelties they exercised upon the Jews. "For God is just," he continues, "and does not wish that force should be used to constrain any one to come to Him." Hear how St. Bernard speaks, on this occasion, in his epistle to the clergy and people of the eastern parts of France:—"Brethren, I admonish you, with the apostle of God, to believe not every spirit. We hear and rejoice that the zeal of God is fervent within you; but it must be according to knowledge. The Jews are not to be persecuted, nor to be slain, nor even to be banished."† He expresses himself still more strongly in his letter to Henry, archbishop of Mayence, when censuring Radulf for exciting the Christians against the Jews:—"O shameless man, to approve of homicide! Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who laid down the sword at the word of Him who had commanded it to be drawn? Art thou greater than the prince of the apostles, who sought from the Lord, Domine, si percutimus in gladio? But thou art instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; that is, in the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God. Otherwise, thou wouldst obey the charge to Peter, Mitte gladium in locum suum. Doth not the Church triumph more abundantly over the Jews day by day, convincing and converting them, than if once for all she were to destroy them with the sword? Is it in vain that the universal prayer of the Church hath been constituted, which is offered for the perfidious Jews, from the rising to the setting sun—that the Lord God would take away the veil from their hearts, and that they might be turned from their darkness to the light of truth? For unless she hoped that they who were incredulous might be brought to believe, it would be superfluous and vain to pray for them. But she knew that all Israel was to be saved. Art thou the man, then, who is to prove liars all the prophets, and to make void all the treasures of the piety and mercy of Jesus Christ? Thy doctrine is not thine, but it is thy Father's who sent thee. But I believe thou art content to be like thy

* Epist. viii. 21.

† Ep. vii. 186.

‡ Inn. III. Epist. Lib. ii. c. cccii.

§ Hurter, Innocenz III. vol. I. book iii. p. 314.

* Chronic. Hirsangiens. an. 849.

† Epist. cccxlxiii.

master, for he was a murderer from the beginning—a liar and the father of lies. O monstrous science! O infernal wisdom! contrary to the prophets, hateful to the apostles, subversive of piety and grace. O most foul hereay! O execrable sacrilege!"*

When the Christians of Clermont destroyed the synagogue of the Jews, in the year 576, on account of their having ill-treated a Jew who had embraced the faith of Christ, St. Avitus, the bishop of that see, interposed, and forbade that violence should be offered to the Jews; and sending legates to them, said, "I seek not to compel you to confess the Son of God, but I will preach and deliver the salt of wisdom to your breasts; for of you the true Shepherd who suffered for us said, that he had other sheep who were not of His fold, whom He must also bring." On the third day, a great number of the Jews sent to inform him that they were desirous of baptism. Great was the joy of the holy bishop and of all the people. On the night of Pentecost, after celebrating vigils the prelate proceeded to the baptistery without the walls. The wax tapers burned on all sides, and the lustre of lamps shone around. The whole city put on white. The rejoicing was not less than when Jerusalem deserved to see the Holy Ghost descending upon the apostles. The number of the Jews baptized was five hundred.† Such toleration was nothing but the traditional manners of the episcopacy. When St. Gallus I., who had preceded Avitus in the same see, died, the Jews themselves followed his bier, mourning and carrying lighted torches.‡

Rodulph, abbot of St. Tron, had pursued the same line of conduct towards the Jews; and an ancient writer says, that he frequently had a conference with them, not reproving them and condemning them, but softening the hardness of their hearts by gentleness and mild treatment. Therefore he was so much beloved by them, that even their women used to come to see him and speak with him.§

In like manner, St. Sulpitius, bishop of Bourges in the seventh century, by his gentleness is recorded to have converted all the Jews that were in his diocese. No example, however, is more admirable than that of St. Vincent Ferrier, the Dominican. Whole synagogues are said to have been converted by one of his sermons. On one

occasion, preaching at Tortosa, he begged of the people to receive with kindness the strangers who were coming, and to yield up their best places to them. In a few minutes this company arrived, composed of all the Jews who formed the synagogue in that city; and most of them, before leaving the church, were converted to Christianity. In the diocese of Valencia, all the Jews, without exception, embraced the Christian religion, in consequence of his sermons; and at Toledo, so few persisted in that belief, that their synagogue was converted into a church. Doubtless his zeal was extraordinary; but can any one convict it of intolerance? At Salamanca, all that he did was to enter their synagogue, holding a cross in his hand, while the Jews were assembled in it, and to entreat them to hear what he had to say. Their astonishment and anger changed to admiration; and the result of that sermon was the baptism of the whole assembly. The synagogue was then changed into a church, which ever after bore the name of the Holy Cross.*

Solicitude for the conversion of the Jews was a remarkable feature in the character of the middle ages. In many churches, as in that of the Magdalen at Paris, it was the custom to offer up public prayers for this object on other days besides Good Friday.†

In conclusion, it is but just to admit that even the civil power was sometimes moved by a sense of piety to protect these unfortunate men. The equity which King Charles V. of France evinced, in not suffering the Jews to be injured by any fraudulent dealing of persons who would give a false pledge, is recorded by Christine de Pisan, among the proofs of his goodness.‡ But it was not alone the Jews who experienced the protection of religion. In general no class of men were excluded from the mild forbearance of the Church. It is expressly related of many holy prelates, like St. William, archbishop of Bourges, that with respect to penitents and great sinners, they would never have recourse to the punishments of the civil power which might then be inflicted on them. "The ecclesiastical judge," saith the universal doctor, "ought to punish no one with a corporal pain; but, on the contrary, he should intercede with the secular judge for

* Epist. cccxv.

† Gallia Christiana, tom ii. 242. ‡ Id. ii. 239.

§ Chronic. Abbat. S. Trudonis, Lib. xi. p. 489, apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. vii.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xvii.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 1, chap. xi.

‡ Livre des Fais du Sage Roy, chap. xxiii.

those who are condemned.* Continually did the Church interpose to stay the temporal sword, and to remind the civil government that some of its laws were inconsistent with the whole spirit of the Christian religion, repeating the words addressed by St. Augustin to a judge, "Noli usque ad mortem, ne cum persequaris peccatum, perdas hominem. Noli usque ad mortem, ut sit quem pœniteat."†

Joseph Ciantes, a Dominican, on being appointed to the see of Marsico, a city at the foot of the Apennines, in the kingdom of Naples, found that a scandalous division had existed during the pontificate of four of his predecessors, on the part of the people and clergy of Saponara, who refused to admit the jurisdiction of those prelates. Having cited the chiefs of the revolt before the tribunal of the Rota at Rome, he obtained a sentence against them; to the justice of which tribunal in general we have the testimony of a no less inveterate adversary than Luther, who says, "Nothing deserves praise at Rome but the consistory and the court of the Rota, where affairs are conducted and judged with great justice."‡ When urged, however, to execute this sentence, and told that the King of Spain would send troops to enforce it and compel the refractory to submit, the bishop refused absolutely, saying, "No, I am not the vicar of the charity of Jesus Christ, to make sinners perish, but to labour to render them good." His next step was to order public prayers; and then, on a day secretly fixed, with the lively faith of one who hopes all from Jesus Christ, he set out at the head of his clergy, and followed by a multitude of the faithful in fervent supplication. Upon arriving near Saponara, the inhabitants received information of his coming, and hastily closing their gates, armed themselves as if about to sustain a siege. All the inhabitants, men and women, laity and clergy, mounted on the walls. The most violent even threatened to fire upon the prelate if he should continue to advance. Every kind of insulting cry assailed his ears. Nevertheless, this was the moment ordained by Divine Providence for putting an end for ever to these long contestations. Clothed in his pontifical habits, and seated on the trunk of a tree opposite the gate, the apostolic man made a sign

to beg that the people would only hear him speak; then, with the Holy Bible in his hand, he began with the words of Jesus Christ: "And if they receive you not, shake off the dust from your feet. Verily I say unto you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." The discourse of the prelate, or rather the word of God on his tongue, struck the hearts of the multitude with astonishment; but when, in conclusion, he actually began to obey the precept, to shake off the dust from his feet, and to turn his back as if departing, in an instant the air resounded with sighs and groans, and supplications. There was, even at that moment, some danger lest the revolted ecclesiastics might be hurled headlong from the top of the walls. The hostile arms instantly disappear—the gates are thrown open, and the people in multitudes press forward to prostrate themselves at the bishop's feet. "We are your sheep," was then the voice heard on every side;—"you are our pastor—treat us as a father, have pity on us, pray the great God to forgive us, enter our city, and dispose of every thing as it seemeth good to you." The gracious words and the sweet seraphic looks of the holy prelate completed this wonderful transformation. He entered the city, took the necessary steps for effecting the required reforms, and on his departure pronounced the solemn benediction. The termination of this disorder was hardly credited at Rome for some time; and Fontana says, that those who were present could scarcely believe what they saw with their own eyes.*

Such, then, was the spirit and practice of the Church. But it was not so easy to lead the temporal government to the same conclusion, and to make it co-operate with "the Catholic mildness" of an Avitus and an Augustin. In the middle ages, the purity of the religious doctrine and respect for the ecclesiastical authority were generally known and felt by those who possessed wisdom of government, to be the elements of the happiness and grandeur of a nation, as also of the social order and public tranquillity. Hence the suppression of heresy was deemed a matter of importance, and, independent of every other consideration, an object to secure which all the energies of magistrates were to be employed. Ac-

* Alani de Insulis contra Waldenses, c. 22.

† Serm. XIII.

‡ Michelet. Mem. de Luth. ii.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. v. liv. 37.

cordingly, in 1551, when heresy assumed such a formidable political aspect in France, the civil power complained of the slowness of the ecclesiastical proceedings against it; and Henry II., fearing, as Daniel says, that he would not find in the ecclesiastical tribunals as much rigour and severity as he wished in an affair of this importance, gave cognizance of it to the parliament, and even to the presidents, whose judges, to the number of ten, decided upon all these causes without appeal. Now it is to the political and selfish policy of these rulers, that the adversaries of the Catholic religion are indebted for the acts and measures which supply them with such abundant matter for declamation, whenever they have occasion to excite the minds of the ignorant against it.

Catherine de Medicis, the prime mover of the massacre, on the day of St. Bartholomew, was personally disposed to favour and adopt the Protestant opinions; and it was only as members of a political party that she wished to destroy those who employed them in opposition to the government. It was she who provoked the conference at Poissy, against the remonstrance of the bishops, who represented the danger of public disputations against faith; and she wrote to the pope on this occasion, stating that it was necessary to favour the Calvinists, and desiring him not to cut off from the communion of the Church those "who held fundamental points, and only doubted of things indifferent;" such, she added, as the use of images, which she herself considered to be forbidden in Scripture;—certain ceremonies at baptism—the confining communion to one kind; and she conceived "that the giving both species was more conformable to Scripture" than what had been decided by the councils. She desired, also, that the fête of Corpus Christi and the processions might be suppressed, that the divine service should be in the vulgar tongue, and that all masses should be abolished at which the priest alone communicated. Could the Church be answerable for such a person?

It was the current error of the day, broached by the pseudo-reformers—it was a diabolic superstition combined with it—not Rome, and her holy and merciful influence, which formed the mind of Catherine; and as for those who worked in the massacre, L'Estoile says, "Not one of these bravos believed in a God."*

* Vide S. Victor, *Tableau de Paris*, tom. iii. 74.

However, there is no need to exaggerate horrors. It appears that the story of the king's couriers to the provinces, to extend the massacre, is a fabrication, as is consequently the reply of the Viscount d'Ortez, governor of Bayonne.* Rome heard of the massacre only in these words from the king; "that he had just succeeded in defeating a horrible conspiracy which had threatened his life, and that of all his family;" which was an intelligence that could have surprised no one, since Pius V. had written long before to warn him that a revolt was preparing, that troops were raising for the purpose in Germany, and that the Queen of England had promised to send both money and soldiers. No measures, however, had been taken to prepare against the danger; and, in consequence, the whole kingdom was filled with blood and desolation. When the king's messengers arrived, therefore, leaving the true event enveloped in mystery, it was but just that public rejoicings, as a measure of political courtesy in a friendly state—to say nothing of any natural and laudable sympathy—should be ordered in consequence. Nor did the evil terminate in this perversion of rulers and statesmen; for the policy of making religion a mere instrument of ambition, while heresy, as an opinion, was in reality favoured, soon found partisans among the noble and great families of Europe, not even the Montmorencies forming an exception. Nevertheless, it would be great injustice not to remark a distinction between the maxims and conduct of civil government in the middle ages, before the rise of the Machiavellian principles and those of later times, subsequent to their general diffusion. The zeal of religious princes in ages of faith, and the love they bore their people, may have required refinement where spirits are made pure; yet were they free, at least, from all base mixture of personal or political interest. The Emperor Rupert, on being elected king of the Romans, visiting the different cities of the empire, came to Spire, and a number of proscribed persons with him, according to the custom of Germany, which permitted banished men to enter the cities from which they had been expelled, as part of his train; on which occasion the emperor used to hear their different cases, and decide upon them. At this time a citizen of high con-

* Vide S. Victor, *Tableau de Paris*, tom. iii. 196.

dition was welcomed by the principal men and a crowd of relations, who greatly desired his return; but when the emperor heard that he had been banished for blaspheming God, he gave judgment that he, on the contrary, should remain in exile while all the others received full pardon.* This was certainly the spirit of heroic rulers in the middle ages, when the cords to punish sinners were drawn by Charity's correcting hand.

It is quite a modern discovery, due to the new principles of civilization, that a country may justly be invaded by other states, and its king forcibly dethroned by them, to vindicate some wretch who had been punished according to law for an infamous outrage, too atrocious to be described, for which he would have been, even in these other states perhaps, torn in pieces on the spot by the people, had he offended before them in a similar manner. Portugal has therefore, in our times, experienced a fate unprecedented in the annals of the world, and which in no former age men could have conceived to be among the accidents of human things.

Plato decreed that for sacrilege men should be burnt on the forehead and hands, scourged, and banished from the state; and certainly the Christian Church could not have been furnished with a satisfactory reply to such rulers as wished to preserve the minds of their people from being corrupted, and the safety of human life undermined by an outrage against religion, and who should have been told by her that no open and prodigious violation of the reverence due to God ought to be visited with chastisement from those who were expressly styled in Scripture the ministers of God, bearing not the sword in vain.

Modern poets might have been spared much painful excitement, if some charitable instructor had informed them that they were totally in error as to the grounds on which such penalties were awarded. Alanus de Insulis remarks that for sacrilege men are punished temporally, not as having sinned against God, but as having sinned against men, for the correction and warning of others.†

The old poet of the Gentiles said, "The evil, because they hate the good, are evil; and the good, because they hate the evil, are good: therefore those who always hated

the evil must be good."* This was not exactly the conclusion that Christian philosophy would permit men to draw; nor were the premises expressed in conformity with the Catholic distinction already remarked; according to which as St. Augustin and St. Thomas say, men were to hate the sin and love the sinner. But certainly the converse of this maxim would never have been admitted in the ages of mercy and faith,—that the good, because they are indifferent to evil, and permit men to propagate evil among those who had been before good, were good; and that, therefore, those princes were good and truly merciful who had always shown indifference, or perhaps favour, to the evil.

The rule was for all men, without admitting of any dispensation for princes. *Qui non est mecum, contra me est: et qui non colligit mecum, dispergit.* How could any system, resembling what is now so falsely termed liberal, be advocated by men who believed that the above sentence had been pronounced by the mouth of God? It was not merely the judgment of rulers, it was the conviction of the people, that Catholic princes were bound, as St. Augustin shows, to take measures to protect the faithful from the infection of heretics,‡ and to repress such evil, excepting when a greater danger would attend these measures than that which they were designed to obviate.‡ The abbot Eanulf, contemporary of St. Boniface, writing to Charles, king of the Franks, expressly reasons on this principle, and says, that it is for this end the omnipotent God raises up good rulers, that prelates, by their assistance, may be enabled to exercise their functions, which is now manifest, he adds, "in the nation of the Franks, over whom your glory is made to preside, that by the goods entrusted to you, the subjects of your nation may attain to eternal benefits. Therefore, O glorious king, be solicitous to exercise well that grace which has been given to you from above: hasten to extend the Christian faith in the people subject to you, that the temples of the heathens may be overthrown, and that your example and power may have influence to assist the conversion of men, that you may obtain a recompense in heaven from Him, whose name and honour you have sought to magnify among the nations of the earth."§

* Plantus, Pseudol. Prolog.

† Tract. xi. in Joan.

‡ Joan. Devoti Instit. Canon. Lib. iv. tit. vi.

§ S. Bonifac. Epist. lxxxii.

* Drexelius de Vitiis Linguae, cap. vi.

† Alani de Insulis contra Waldenses, c. 22.

The Church herself was bound to act with justice and prudence, as well as mercy. "Times, and the different state of seasons, are to be weighed, which change the merit of causes," says Petrus Cellensis; "for in the primitive Church, patience alone was to find place, which was to give the cloak also to him that would take away the tunic; for it was one without the Church who persecuted, and it was one within who suffered; but now that the Church is adult, it is not lawful for her sons to do what her enemies may have done lawfully. For it becomes a mother to correct her son, as it becomes a pupil to endure an adversary."* Of the toleration which springs from indifference to religion, and which is found quite compatible with an odious and insidious persecution, Manes was the first author, as may be seen in St. Epiphanius.† Calculating all the advantages which can possibly be ascribed to such a system, one finds much greater danger and evil to the people with whom it exists, than would result from a religious toleration, which endeavours to repress scandals that tend to undermine all religion, and all virtue among mankind; for so far, at least, the maxims of Æschylus may be admitted. It is good to make men respect the good by fear.

Συμφέροι
σφραγισθῆναι ὑπὸ στένει. ‡

"I will utter a short sentence," says that wise poet:—"Insolence is the true child of impiety; but from the health of minds proceeds happiness, which is dear to all. § Do not, therefore, expel all severity of punishment from the city; for what mortal, who fears nothing, will be just?" Alas! with what certainty might we add, or what mortal, who fears nothing, will suffer others to serve God in justice and peace?

καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἕξω βαλεῖν
τίς γὰρ δεδουκὸς μηδὲν ἔνδικος βροτῶν;||

The crusades, and the religious orders of knighthood which conducted them, have been represented by many modern historians as furnishing evidence of the intolerance of the middle ages; and the inconsistency of propagating religion by the sword has been clearly and eloquently

shown; though, had these writers spent more time in consulting the original sources, they would never have supposed that there was anything in their argument to which the men of former ages would not have given a cordial assent. Every intelligent person, at the present day, is aware, that the writers of the last century took a false view of these events, and that the wars against the Mahometans in Palestine, in Spain, and in the south of France, were justifiable on the principle of self-defence, which was always that on which they received sanction. It is on this ground alone, that St. Bernard justifies them in his epistle to the clergy and people of the eastern parts of France. "As we must be content to wait," he says, "for the salvation of the Jews, so should we also endure the Gentiles, and not go forth to attack them with arms; but now, since they begin to be violent against us, it is fitting that those who bear not the sword in vain should, by force, repel force."* That Christians may sometimes strike with the sword, appears to him proved by our Lord's answer to the soldiers; and then he asks, on what occasion can it be more lawful than in defence of Sion, and of the just generation guarding truth, that the nations which desire war may be dispersed, and those who disturb the city of God cut off, in fulfilment of that ancient promise, "Ponam te in superbiam sæculorum;" and "in Jerusalem consolabimini," provided the literal sense be not permitted to impair the spiritual, or make men forget that celestial city, of which the earthly Sion is but the figure?† All the zealous advocates who wrote to instigate the chivalry of Europe to engage in the crusade, were evidently under the impression that Christendom was exposed to imminent danger of being overrun by infidels, and of seeing the cross superseded by the symbol of the false prophet. Was it imaginary terror, when, even in Italy, cities had fallen into their hands? The monk Nicholas, from whose work, entitled "The Great Voyage to Jerusalem," I have so often had occasion to cite passages, when calling upon the Christians of the west to bear assistance against the persecutors of Christ, had this idea uppermost in his mind, which might be urged in his excuse for many violent and unguarded expressions; yet, even amidst all this intemperance, he con-

* Petri Cellens. Epist. Lib. i. 10.

† Hæres. Sæcul. iii. n. 66.

‡ Eumenid. 520. § Id. 534. || Id. 698.

* Epist. cccxliii.

† Exhort. ad Milit. Templi, c. 3.

cludes with these words:—"Certain it is, that we ought not to slay them; but since they are incessantly devising means to massacre and destroy us, it is better to attack them; for one ought not to permit the rod of the wicked to reign over the good, since that would be only to arm the hands of iniquity against the just."* "How," asks Innocent III., "can any man, according to the divine precept, love his neighbour as himself, who knows that his brethren, in faith and name Christians, are confined in the direful dungeons of the perfidious Sarassins, and bowed under the yoke of most grievous slavery, and yet does not make efforts to deliver them, going farther than the precept of the natural law, and, as the Lord commandeth, doing to others what they wish others should do to them? Are you not aware, that with them there are many thousand Christians in servitude and prisons, who are crucified with innumerable torments?"† Do not these considerations furnish a satisfactory explanation, to account for that trunk of the holy land placed in every Church of Christendom, by order of Innocent, of which the bishop, the rector, and a devout layman, had each a key? Do they not explain why the holy mass was solemnly sung once every week with that intention; why, at every mass, the prayer was said of *Deus venerunt gentes*;‡ and why, every month, there was a general procession of men and women, in humility of mind and body, with devout prayer, imploring the mercy of Almighty God?§ And is it reasonable to charge the chivalry of Europe with being intolerant and cruel, because it responded to this voice? Must we exclude from the fellowship of the blessed merciful Geoffroy de Villehardouin, the Marechal of Champagne, and his five noble companions, because having been deputed to repair to Venice, to implore ships to convey the crusaders to Palestine, at the direction of the doge Dandolo, they, on presenting themselves, fell upon their knees before the assembled people, declaring, that they would not rise till the republic had consented to take pity upon the holy land? Did such fervour indicate cruelty? Or is it by bringing a general charge of intolerance against the middle ages, that one can explain this great movement of the people? Pope Innocent III.

wrote to the sultan of Damascus and Babylon, and wishing to imitate him who says of himself, "*Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde*," humbly besought his greatness that, by his violent detention of Jerusalem, no more human blood might be shed than had already been shed, and following a sounder counsel that he would restore it to the Christians, considering, that from its detention, besides vain glory, more, perhaps, of difficulty than of utility results to him;" adding, "let afterwards the captives of both sides be delivered, and let us rest, in future, from all mutual offence, in such a manner, that the men of our race may not be in a worse condition with you, than those of yours are with us."* In fact, the communications between that pontiff and the infidels who remained amidst the Christians, had been always of a most friendly nature. In his letter to the nobles, and other inhabitants of Sicily, denouncing the guilt of the tyrant Marconaldus, whose cause was espoused by the Sarassins of the island, and exhorting them not to suffer the faithful to be oppressed by infidels, he adds these words, "for although we wish to love and favour the Sarassins, and augment the good customs which regard them, if they remain loyal to the legitimate king, yet we do not wish, nor ought we to suffer, that they should effect the ruin of the kingdom along with Marconaldus;"† and in the letter which he addressed to all the Sarassins in Sicily, he reminds them, that it is from the enemy of the Holy See that they have reason to fear, saying, "for we wish you to consider, and hold for certain, that if his eye spareth not the Christians, whose priests he casteth into the sea, he will not spare the Sarassins, against whom he will rage with so much the greater freedom, as he believes that he could do God service by shedding the blood of Pagans. We exhort you, therefore, to imitate the constancy of your ancestors, and not to be ungrateful for the benefits which you have received from the kings of Sicily, considering, also, the mildness of the apostolic see, which not only wishes to protect you in good customs, but also to increase its favour to you."‡ With respect to the men who took up arms in this cause, there has, in modern times, been a great diversity of opinion; but I

* *Le Grand Voyage à Hierusalem*, f. cx.

† *Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xvi. c. 28.*

‡ *Gesta Inn. III. 84.*

§ *Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xvi. c. 28.*

* *Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xvi. 37.*

† *Inn. III. Epist. Lib. ii. 221.*

‡ *Id. Lib. ii. 226.*

believe that the ancient and contemporary writers knew them better than the authors of the present day. "O, what utility," exclaims Pope Innocent III., "hath already resulted from this cause! How many converted to penitence have engaged in the service of Christ, for the deliverance of the holy land, and, as if by the agony of martyrdom, have obtained a crown of glory, who, perhaps, would otherwise have persisted in their iniquities, tangled in the net of carnal pleasures, and worldly delights. This is the ancient artifice of Jesus Christ, which, for the salvation of his people, he hath been pleased to renew in these days."* Accordingly, amongst other secret and inscrutable causes of the invasion and detention of the eastern land, he says, "that the Lord, perhaps, in his mercy permitted it, from foreseeing that many leaving their parents and friends, and all that they had, following Christ under the banner of the cross, would be crowned with martyrdom in the defence of that land, so that the triumphant Church would receive joy and increase in heaven, whence the militant would seem to suffer grief and diminution on earth."† Assuredly, in innumerable instances, it was the charity of Christ which urged the steps of the Red Cross Knight and Pilgrim to the holy land. He was a devoted man, whose armour conscience buckled on; whom charity and compassion brought to the field as God's own soldier. The Italian poet represents Godfroy, of Bouillon, as expressing the sentiments which really did animate these Paladins, when he declares, that the deliverance of the Christians was the sole object of his enterprise.—

"But not for this our homes we first forsook,
And from our native soil have march'd so far,
Nor us to dangerous seas have we betook,
Expos'd to hazard of so far-sought war,
Of glory vain to gain an idle smook,
And lands possess'd, that wild and barbarous
are :
That for our conquests were too mean a prey
To shed our blood, to work our soul's decay.
But this the scope was of our former thought,
Of Sion's fort to scale the noble wall,
The Christian folk from bondage to have brought,
Wherein, alas! they long have lived thrall :
In Palestine, an empire to have wrought,
Where holiness might reign perpetual,
And none be left, that pilgrims might deny
To see Christ's tomb, and promis'd vows to
pay."‡

The wars of the Spaniards, also, against the Moors, under the sanction of the Church, have been especially condemned by modern political and moral writers, as indicating cruelty and intolerance; though it will be hard for any dispassionate historian, after an investigation of the facts, to sanction such a sentence: for, in the first place, as in the case of the other crusades, it was a war in self-defence; in which, not alone Spain, but the whole of Christendom was interested. Pope Innocent III., in his letter to the archbishops of Toledo and Compostello, charging them to make peace between the kings of Spain, in order that they may render each other a mutual assistance against the Sarassins, adds these words, "who not only aspire to the destruction of Spain, but threaten also to exercise their cruelty in other countries of the faithful of Christ, and, what heaven avert, to oppress the Christian name."* How grateful to this illustrious pontiff must have been the noble and affecting letter of Alphonso, king of Castille, some time afterwards, relating the great victory of the Navas de Toloso; in which he says, there was nothing to lament, but the smaller number of martyrs who, from such an army, passed to Christ.† The war was necessary. It was waged by men whose whole trust was in the mercy of that God who they well knew would bless none but the merciful, and who advanced to battle, having the figure of the Lord's cross preceding them, and on their banner wrought the image of the blessed Virgin and her Child; that, beholding the ignominy suffered by the image of that Mother, which was pierced with stones and arrows, they might resolve to die with constancy for the faith of Christ.‡ King James I. of Aragon, on death-bed laid, spoke to his son Peter as follows:—"Be sure always to bear three things in mind; in the first place, to fear God with all your soul, and commit yourself wholly to Him;—secondly, to preserve your people in concord and duty;—thirdly, to keep peace and fraternal union with your brother James." Then, going on to speak of the wars against the Moors, he advised him to expel them from his dominions by force of arms, because they were the perpetual and intestine enemies of the Christians, so that they never could be prevailed upon to remain at peace with Christians, and never could be moved,

* Epist. Lib. xvi. 28.

† Inn. III. Epist. Lib. ii. 211.

‡ Book i. 22.

* Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xv. 15.

† Roder. Tolet. Lib. vii. c. 12.

‡ Id. Lib. vii. c. 10.

either by prayers or humanity, to be faithful to Christ.*

"Those who hate all wars," says an ancient Spanish historian, "should yet consider that there were near causes which did not suffer the Spanish people to remain inactive any longer; for, in the first place, by external nations we used to be reproached that we had not only enemies constantly in our sight before our eyes, but that we could hardly support their repeated and unprovoked injuries. For who is so remote or ignorant of our affairs as not to know what a depopulation of our lands, what a carrying away of our flocks and herds, with their pastors, what attacks upon our villages and castles, were practised by these most cruel enemies? Moreover, every day they grew stronger, and threatened more stoutly, so that it seemed as if at last we were not to have any share in Spanish things. At length, what rendered this war unavoidable, Hali Abenhazan, King of the Moors, hearing that we were greatly occupied with other matters, and finding that the castle of Zaharam was more negligently guarded, took occasion to surprise it by night, killing the commander and his men against all law and justice and treaty, leading away in triumph men, women, and children, with flocks and herds. Who, then, can blame the Spanish Princes for resolving to make war against the Moors of Grenada?"† Let it be imagined that a tribe differing in race, religion, laws, government, and manners, had been introduced by force into any of these nations of the north, which now boast of having views more enlightened, tolerant, and merciful, than those old Spanish kings: can any one doubt, excepting on the ground of a total loss of national energy, whether, under the continued pressure of the original violence, they would consider it fitting to endeavour to drive them from their soil? Why, then, are we to condemn the Catholic Spaniards for vindicating their country; or does the mere fact, that they beheld the Church and the Christian faith trampled upon, and exposed to daily perils and outrages, suffice to render their patriotism nothing but cruelty and religious intolerance? Deep and holy indeed were the emotions inspired by the deliverance of their ancient cities from what the writers

of the middle ages term "the detestable folly of the Sarazin;" and full of noble inspiration were the heroic deeds which, in connection with that protracted struggle, were enshrined in all their hearts. On one of the pillars of the cathedral of Cordova, of dark grey jasper, is a large rude cross called, "la cruz del cautivo," and held in great reverence. "A captive Christian," says the legend, "was by the Moors chained to this pillar, and forced to behold the horrors of their superstition, and the mockery of the holy faith; but he scratched with his nails the cross on the hard stone, as if taking possession of the temple of the false prophet, in the name of the holy Saviour. Shortly afterwards the prisoner would have received the crown of martyrdom; but that, in a few days, King St. Ferdinand took the city, which had been the seat of the Moorish empire since the year 718, and changed the mosque of the unbelievers into the cathedral of the new bishopric of Cordova. On this memorable day the angels of mercy were amidst the conquering army, to moderate the ardour of the soldiers, to protect the women, to preach the Gospel to the Moorish prisoners, and to break the chains of the Christian captives. These were the works to which St. Peter Gonzalez then devoted himself."* Let it be remembered, at the same time, with what benignity and mercy the Catholic society of Spain had always treated individually the Moors; how it respected their learned men, loved their minstrels, and received with honour and liberality the ambassadors of their kings. The Arabic knights were received without distinction, on the ground of their infidelity, at the courts of the Christian princes of Spain and Sicily. The Arabic philosophers were entertained in the palaces of many Christian kings. Edrissi lived at the court of the Norman Roger, and the sons of Averroës at that of Frederick Barbarossa. Sometimes even we find them in offices of honour, in the same manner as in earlier ages, when Macrobius, though a Pagan, held a high official dignity under the Christian emperor Theodosius the younger.

The institution of the Teutonic Knights is another subject of offence to the same description of observers; and yet, if we study their history, we shall find not only that the original object of their establish-

* Bernardini Gomesii, Lib. xx.

† Cælii Antoni Nebrissensis, *Rerum Hispanarum Historici*, Decad. II. Lib. i. c. 1.

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. i.*

ment was simply the protection of the Christians from the Pagans of the north, who were in the habits of making the most ferocious inroads on the newly converted nations; but also that their conduct towards the nations whom they subdued was in conformity with the tenderest mercy and toleration; so that peace and charity, and all offices of love, soon succeeded to the storm of war, whenever they had been obliged to have recourse to it. The plan was first formed by Bishop Albert, in the year 1199, of founding an order of Christian Knights, to protect the infant Church in Prussia from the repeated invasions of the heathens of the north, and it was approved of by Pope Innocent III.* If we are afflicted at hearing of Henry of Poland, and blessed Ambrose of Sienna, preaching a crusade against the Pagans of those regions, we should remember that these barbarians were continually falling upon the Christian communities, burning the towns, and putting all to the sword who were unable to resist them.†

Pope Innocent III. in his Epistle to all the faithful of Christ in Saxony and Westphalia, makes known to them the numerous conversions made by the bishop of Livonia in that region, and relates how the enemy of man, through envy, has raised a persecution of the Pagans against these new Christians, and inspired the worshippers of brutes, and trees, and waters, and unclean spirits, with a resolution to destroy them from the earth, and abolish the memory of the Christian name. Lest, therefore, it should be imputed to his negligence, if those who already believe should be compelled to go back, or those who desire to embrace our faith should be discouraged and prevented from doing so, the Pontiff admonishes and exhorts them to take measures for obliging the Pagans, who surrounded the Livonian Church, to make a treaty, and to observe it, and promises the protection of St. Peter to all who repair thither, to defend the Christians in the name of God.‡ Nor was the evil confined to that infant Church. Against the formidable incursions of the Tartars from the north, the Teutonic Knights furnished a most important assistance to Europe; and the pope, in a bull, soliciting aid for them, says, that they are

frequently in want of the necessaries of life, while under a continued expectation of martyrdom.*

The Sovereign Pontiffs, Alexander IV. and Urban IV., not content with ordering fasts and processions, raised their voice to warn the princes and people of Christendom of the necessity of resisting these formidable hordes, whose vast projects and rapid conquests seemed to threaten the whole Christian world. Certainly, before men condemn the institution and conduct of the Teutonic Knights, they should consider what was the situation of the Christian society in the north. No pen could describe the barbarous rage of the Pagans, who used to lay waste and burn the lands and towns of the Christians with an insatiable fury. "The Lithuanians," says the old historian, "according to their error, proposed to sacrifice a Christian to their gods. The lot fell upon the commander Marguard Von Raschan. They bound him to his horse, while still bleeding from his wounds, and then committed both to the flames."† So convinced indeed at the time were all European nations of the real character of this warfare, that nobles and princes from the most distant countries, Scotland, England, and France, used to repair to Prussia, to assist the Teutonic Order. "The table of honour" was then instituted, to entertain them before setting out on an expedition, as also after its termination. In 1300, Henry Count of Derby, the Duke John of Lancaster's eldest son, who afterwards succeeded to the crown of England as Henry IV. came to Dantzic with 300 attendants. Out of France, on the same occasion, came the renowned knight Boucicaut, whose tragic fate furnishes so memorable a page in history.‡

With respect to the internal administration, one cannot read the admonitions addressed to these rulers by Pope Innocent III. without feeling convinced that its general character was mercy and liberality. That Pontiff reminds the dukes and nobles of Poland and Pomerania, that although, as the Apostle saith, "it is impossible without faith to please God, yet that faith alone is not sufficient for that end, but that charity, above all, is necessary; without which, faith will profit nothing." He remarks to them, that as this is to be exercised towards all men, and extended also to enemies, so towards those who have

* Voigt Geschichte Preussens, i. 6.

† Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 3.

‡ Epist. Inn. III. liv. ii. 191.

* Voigt, iii. 151.

† Voigt Geschichte Preussens, v. ‡ Id. v. 541.

been lately drawn from the error of the Gentiles to the knowledge of truth, it should be exercised with so much the more fervour, as they might be more easily inclined to look back, if treated with inhumanity. Reports have reached the pontiff of deeds which seem to proclaim that they require to be reminded of this truth. Therefore, he beseeches and exhorts them in the Lord, and commands them by apostolic rescript, in the name of him who came to save what was lost, and to give his soul a ransom for many, not to oppress the children of this new plantation, but to act towards them with so much the more clemency, as the weak might be in danger of falling back to their former conversation, since old bottles can scarcely contain new wine. And he gives charge to the Archbishop of Gnesne to cherish this people benignantly, for the sake of God; to defend them from all molestation and burdens, and to restrain their oppressors by ecclesiastical censure.* Again at the suggestion of the Abbot Nicholas, and several bishops, he writes to the soldiers of Christ in Livonia, warning them against throwing an impediment in the way of these apostolic men, by seeking to increase their possessions, rather than to defend the faithful; reminding them, that the kingdom of God is not lands and towns, but peace and justice and joy in the Holy Ghost; and declaring that they shall be deprived of all privileges granted by the apostolic authority, if any clamour against them, arising from their cupidity, should ever again rise to the Holy See.†

After a review, however, of the conduct of this renowned order, from the commencement, towards the people with whom they were confronted, the impartial historian arrives at the conclusion that no charge of intolerance can be substantiated generally against them. "Not with the sword alone," says the historian of Prussia, "but also with the cross of Christ, the emblems of Christian charity and redemption, of Christian pity and tenderness, with the holy symbols of faith and the love of Christ, was the order introduced into the land; and the sublime end of those emblems and these duties was never forgotten, or suffered to perish in the minds of the brethren of the order." Not as lords, but as fathers and brothers, as an old chronicle declares, did they show themselves to the poor, and to the higher classes, inviting the new Christians to hospitality, taking

part in their entertainments, receiving with compassion poor and sick Prussians into their hospitals, taking care of the widows and orphans, whose husbands, and fathers had fallen in the wars, and sending boys and young men of talent to be educated in Germany, especially to the school of Magdeburg, to qualify them to be Christian teachers on their return.* What but mercy in its most exalted sense, could have induced the inhabitants of these exposed frontiers, at times of imminent peril, when they were witnessing the slaughter of so many of their helpless fellow Christians, to suffer as many of their prisoners as expressed a desire for instruction, to be received into the houses of the religious? In 1241, the Tartars, on their advance to Breslau, had put to the edge of the sword all whom they met, sparing neither women nor children, not even the sick or the dying; yet we read, in the annals of the monastery of St. Adalbert, that when the city of Breslau was miraculously delivered from falling into their hands, by the prayers of St. Celas, that holy man received into his order a great number of the prisoners, who evinced a desire to abandon idolatry and to be instructed in the mysteries of the Christian faith. At all times the Teutonic Knights, according to the testimony of the old historian, treated the converted Prussians with the utmost mercy and kindness. Nothing was changed that could be tolerated in a Christian community. The noble was respected as noble, and the ignoble protected in all his privileges, and every thing conducted according to the ancient custom. It is true, if any ignoble person proved himself singularly faithful and useful to the brethren, him they ennobled and exalted; while, on the other hand, eminent acts of malice caused the unfaithful to forfeit their nobility; so that many, born of rustic parents, became possessed of privileges and liberties their posterity ranking with nobility; while conversely, as Duburg says, many neophytes in Prussia, whose ancestors were noble, came to be esteemed ignoble, on account of the malice which those ancestors had evinced against the faith and people of Christ. But Voight concludes, from a general review of the whole state and territorial administration of Prussia by the Teutonic Knights, that the people were governed under them in a much milder and more tolerant manner than is generally at present supposed.† If we

* Epist. tom. iii. liv. xv. 148.

† Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xvi. 128.

* Ib. 293. Voight Geschichte Preussens, ii. 291.

† Geschichte Preussens, iii. 458.

recur to more distant times, and examine the wars against the Saxons, we shall be constrained to arrive at the conclusion of Guizot, who admits, that in pursuing those savage enemies, Charlemagne only obeyed the great necessity of repressing the constant invasion of the barbarians. Still, undoubtedly, instances there were of intolerance in this society of fervent and heroic men. Bigotry, alas, is a besetting sin of our nature, and too often it has been the attendant of religious zeal; but, as a great English philosopher remarks, in a recent work, "it is perhaps most bitter and unsparing when found with the irreligious;" to which truth the history of modern times gives one concurrent testimony. Fearful and strange was the mixture of intolerance and generosity in that act of Roger, king of Sicily, delivering to death Philip his chamberlain, when he discovered that he had been a disguised Sarassin; and the manner in which Romuald of Salerno relates it, perhaps does him but little honour.* Examples of cruel zeal did no doubt occur in the conduct of those chivalrous orders, instituted for the defence of the Christians; as in the case of Hermann Von Altenburg, of the Teutonic order, when he heard of the inhabitants of one Prussian village returning to their idolatry. But what I assert, and what I hope to have proved, is, that in all these instances, there was a contradiction to the concurrent voice of the whole Church in every age, which taught that, not by such sacrifices, but by mercy, God could be glorified.

If, now, we turn upon those who so vehemently accuse the ages of faith, and demand with what consistency they can charge them with intolerance, and whether the revolution in religion, involving both doctrine and manners, which they effected, introduced a spirit of greater mercy and forbearance into the government of states, and the conduct of men in private relations of life,—will they find it easy to give a satisfactory reply? Reader, if thou art one of those early friends who followed my steps through the land of old romance and chivalry, thou wilt not need instruction here, nor deem it strange that I should say little now in justification of our heroic forefathers, for regarding with horror those who espoused this direful cause, the source of shame and sorrow to so large a portion of the human race. "It is a common opinion," says a French historian, "that in the middle ages the heretics alone were persecuted. This is

an error. The Albigenses of Languedoc, the Illuminati of Flanders, the Vaudois of the Alps, the Protestants of La Rochelle and the Avennes, in no instance evinced the gentleness of the first martyrs. Theirs was a warlike spirit, which prompted them to combat without scruple, and to win glory like the heroes of the world—by deeds of arms." Had our charitable and most wise senators, who have lately all of a sudden become conversant with sums of theology, in order to accuse Catholic prelates of intolerance, been pleased to examine the date when these works were originally published, and had they taken a glance at the achievements of their own party, in reference to which some chapters of those works were written, they would perhaps have thought it quite as well to replace the work of poor Peter Dens upon the shelf, even though they were never again to win the fame, among journalists, of scholastic erudition.

Truly it is somewhat over-bold for any followers of the new religion to boast of having taught and practised toleration, and to charge with massacres and revocation of edicts of mercy the ancient Catholic society. It is true they made common cause with all who resisted the authority of Peter's chair: 'tis true, even so early as in the time of Zuingle, there were many of them heard to express their conviction that the great heroes of the Pagan world were in as favourable a position with respect to salvation, as any men in times subsequent to the gospel: 'tis true, also that at the present day some of their most popular authors speak of "the deep and fervent devotion and greatness of mind of Saladin the Turk, and say that, among the European warriors or monarchs of his age, no one appears to have so great a claim to our respect as he." But what avails their claim, founded on such abstract views, which only prove how completely they have lost all trace of the manners and sentiment of the first Christians, when we observe the line of conduct, and even the policy, coolly and premeditatedly acted upon for nearly three centuries, which they adopted in every part of the earth, where power was given to them, towards the immense multitude of their fellow-creatures who remained firm in their attachment to the Catholic Church and to the Holy See of Rome?

Who could count the number of massacres exercised by the Calvinists in France during the twelve years' war of which they were the authors? Wherever they were the strongest, they ravaged the country, burnt or de-

* *Rerum Italic. Script. tom. vii.*

molished the churches, plundered them, and committed the most horrible profanations, massacred the priests and monks who refused to apostatize, put whole multitudes of simple people to the edge of the sword, violated even the graves, and twice attempted to seize the persons of two kings. So terrible were the deeds of these men, whose feet were swift to shed blood, that other nations thought they could discern in them the arm of Almighty Providence taking vengeance upon the French for the massacres and destruction committed in Calabria by the Turks, when in alliance with Francis I., their king.*

"What did they desire?" asks St. Victor, in a sudden transport of most just indignation;—"what did they pretend? Where was their mission? where was their authority? where were their miracles, to preach a new gospel and impose a new religion upon twenty millions of men who wished to preserve their own?"

"As for the proceedings on both sides," says De Bourgueville, in his *Researches on the Antiquities of Normandy*, "the Lord God will be a just judge of every thing; but there is a great difference between these cruel and inhuman murders, committed by private authority, without any formality, and those sentences enacted after hearing of the cause against the disturbers of the public repose; for the poor priests and monks, whom the Protestants massacred so cruelly, had not condemned those who had been executed in pursuance of a judicial sentence, but had assisted and consoled them with great compassion, praying God for them."†

What was the tolerance of their English brethren? Look at the system which they founded by parliamentary acts, and propagated by arbitrary power. Where, then, were the civil and religious liberties of the people?—and where was liberty of conscience, and that freedom of private judgment so falsely proclaimed by the reformers, when some dozen of individuals could cast the chain of bondage over the national mind, and rivet its links by such penalties?‡ The truth is, tolerance was a spirit to which they never laid claim. They canonized persecution; they preached revenge.

"That is the most soldier-like sorrow," cries Fuller, "which in the midst of grief can give order for revenge on such as have

slain their friends. Our general fast was first appointed to bemoan the massacre of our brethren in Ireland; but it is in vain to have a finger in the eye if we have not also a sword in the other hand. We must bend our bows in the camp, as our knees in the churches. Yea, the soldier at the same time may shoot out his prayer to God and aim his pistol at his enemy—the one better hitting the mark for the other."* The book containing these Thoughts has been lately reprinted in England, and, what is more remarkable, formally eulogized as likely to confer the greatest service, so that there can be no injustice in alleging it. "Its author," we are told in the Preface of this edition of 1830, "was a divine of the strictest sincerity and most fervent piety; and this work bears the strongest evidence that his mind rarely wandered from the sacred purport of his ministry." All his faults are censured, but there is no notice of the spirit which breathes in these passages. "Few," we are told, in conclusion, "will peruse these Thoughts without being convinced that they are calculated to strengthen the faith and increase the morality of the world, in all 'times' and in all ages."

It is to Germany or Switzerland that we ought to look for evidence of the superior tolerance of the new system? Those cantons of the latter country, which had embraced the new opinions, as Zurich and Bern, would suffer no Catholics to remain. They sought to starve them out. "As for the common race of men," said Luther, "they ought to be pushed corporally and grossly to do their duty; so that, whether they will or not, they may be exteriorly pious under the law and under the sword, as we keep wild beasts in cages and chains."† Was it in the decretals, or in the canons, or in the scholastic doctors, that he found this doctrine? "If I were in place of these seigneurs," he says elsewhere, "I would assemble the Jews, and challenge them to prove the justice of the epithets which they apply to Christ and St. Mary. If they could prove it, I would give them one hundred florins; if not, I would tear out their tongues."‡ Was it from any pope or doctor of the Roman Church that he learned such toleration?

Calmly and dispassionately throwing our eyes back upon these past events, the accu-

* Gabriel Barri de Antiq. et Situ Calabriae, Lib. iii. in Thesaur. Antiq. Italiae, ix.

† Les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, 181.

‡ Quin's Letters to Molesworth.

* Thoughts, 139, 188.

† Michelet, Mem. de Luther, ii. 156.

‡ Ibid. ii.

sation of intolerance seems the most unreasonable of all those that have been adduced against the ages of faith. When a reform was required and begun, how differently was it conducted by those who adhered to their spirit and traditions, and by those who renounced them! The Catholic reform, as a French writer remarks, moved by gentle thoughts, by exhortations full of soul, songs of a ravishing sweetness, prayers bedewed with tears, tender and fraternal epistles, books penetrating with unction and peace,—such are the living witnesses which remain to us of that holy reform! Compare this with the German reform—with insult on the tongue, and iron in the hand, burning the effigy of the pope, and massacring its adversaries; professing, at the same time, to be actuated solely by the love of truth and the hope of enabling the people to judge for themselves; like Hierocles, the sophist, who, in procuring a massacre of the Christians, published a work against them, entitled, “*Philalethes, or the Friend of Truth.*”

Hear the chief of the German reformers:—“Let them accuse me, if they choose, of being too violent; I care no more for it. I wish thenceforth that my glory and my honour should be in their saying how I rage and swell against the Papists. I have found these cunning men incorrigible. Well, then, since I cannot shake their infernal resolutions by goodness, I break with them. I will pursue them with my imprecations without end or rest, even till my death. They shall never again receive from me a good word. I wish that they may be buried to the sound of my thunder and lightning!” Then after a pause, “I can no longer pray without cursing. If I say, ‘Hallowed be thy name!’ I must add, ‘Cursed be the name of the Papists!’ If I say, ‘Thy kingdom come,’ I am to add, ‘Cursed be the Poppedom!’ Thus I pray ardently every day, and with me all the true faithful of Christ.”*

Well might such an apostle disdain the angel of the school, who taught that prayer is only meritorious when made in charity and inspired by charity!† What a contrast between him and that Spanish friar who prays for charity, while it is charity, and a charity already perfect, which forms his prayer! since it could only have been inspired by the secret operation of Him who gives zeal to his ministers, and infuses love divine into their hearts! What a contrast

to that disciple who walked so faithfully in his steps, Peter of Verona! who carried abnegation so far that he chose to imitate the silence of Jesus Christ, and did not wish men to justify him. In the north, what do we behold? Hatred—that shapeless, fiendly thing of many names—cupidity, ambition, the vile passions of sense—a John Hund, secretary of the elector of Saxony, boasting that the nobles had plundered the monks—a spirit of bitter mockery leading to such deeds as Marlowe ascribes to his Jew of Malta, where he represents Ithamore saying of himself,

“Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneel’d,
I strew’d powder on the marble stones;
And therewithal their knees would rankle so,
That I have laugh’d agood to see the cripples
Go limping home to Christendom on stilts;”

achievements imitated to the letter in France by Huguenots—encouraged, eulogised, by many a dark scribe, who with his iron pen dipped in scorn’s fiery poison, has made his fame enduring. In the south, what is seen with Catholics the while? Disinterestedness, privation, the mortification of nature, the passionate love of suffering, the majestic sorrow of blessed mourners, the purest exaltation of the heart—a John of the Cross crying out, in the midst of the most excruciating pains, “Let us take wing, let us rise, let us rise! What do we here, my brethren? Let us hence to life eternal!” In the north one beholds a rage that induces stupidity, excitement without grandeur, a complete absence of all generous views, no spiritual philosophy, but gross superstition: in the south, a sweetness, an evangelic patience, a serenity which nothing can trouble, a resigned confidence which the greatest obstacles cannot embitter; moreover, a prodigious elevation of views a marvellous knowledge of the intimate wants of man, a profound understanding of our heart and of our nature, an exquisite poesy which seizes on the soul, which elevates, transports—ideas of order, of organization, of creation. On the one side is seen an active and prudent charity, a kind of softness and delicacy tempered by grandeur; on the other, an ingenious and merciless intolerance with a profession of liberty, an ardent and gross sensualism, the energetic corruption of barbarism, which extinguishes, in the fumes of intemperance and in the intoxication of pleasure, the celestial affections of the heart and the light of the understanding.

At the present day, the world itself renders to this truth an involuntary homage.

* Michelet, *Mem. de Luther*, tom. iii. 27.

† S. Thom. 2, 2, Q. 83, a. 2 ad 3um.

"Awake, awake, brave peers of England! Behold the formidable progress of Romanism in this enlightened land! Measure the walls that have been lately built at Hastings to enclose a hospice for the sisters of charity, and then say whether we exaggerated the danger." Such is now the cry of senators, re-echoed on all sides, to attest the propagation of faith in this country; for the world judges of the progress and force of Catholicism by the multiplication of its hospitals, of its colleges, of its churches and sanctuaries of retreat from the world, in a word, by what is seen of charity, study, patience, adoration, and beneficence. It estimates the vitality of Protestantism by violence of its political measures, and the fury of its triumphant anniversaries to commemorate days of horror, days of weeping, days of blood.

"When Sanballat heard that we built a wall, he was very angry," saith the Scripture;* and Hugo of St. Victor remarks, in commenting upon these words, that this is the anger of heretics, of those who call themselves Samaritans, that is, keepers of the law of God, when they are aliens from God and from his law, as from the house of David—that is, from the unity of Christ and his Church, by heresy and schism. These men are unwilling that the walls of the Church should be repaired, lest, the state of piety increasing, they should be obliged to depart from their impiety.†

It was quite sufficient ground, therefore, in their estimation, for exciting a general alarm, and for accusing Catholics of intolerance and tyranny, if they should hear of their building a wall and making an enclosure; but what would have been their discouragement if the only proof of their own ascendancy had been the opening of an asylum for the miserable? It was in something very different from the prayers of the poor that they put their trust. Men learned in the law, need not be reminded that almost the whole statute book of England is occupied with provisions to punish and check Papists, in other words, those whom Luther and Calvin, and their missionaries, had not persuaded to renounce the doctrine of the apostles, and to revolt against the authority of their successors: in comparison with which measures, the intolerance of the Mahometans was liberality itself; for in Don Julian's compromise with the Moors, the latter allowed the Christians to keep possession of their churches; and

at Cordova they were also allowed to build new ones.

The persecuting spirit of the new societies had not even that poor plea to allege of disinterestedness, and of unmixed desire to save the people from destructive errors, which might have been urged by the civil power in Catholic times. Calviu was well known to have cherished a hatred against Servetus for twenty years before he brought him to the stake. With regard to severity of legislation against vices, certainly the progress was immense between the times when the opinion of St. Augustin prevailed, "that some evils ought to be tolerated by the magistrate, lest the whole world should be disturbed with lust;" and the age of Calvin's light, which beheld the rulers of Geneva causing a citizen to be beheaded, for having in his possession a portfolio of immoral prints. Or are we referred, for a mirror of toleration, to those governments which had avowedly adopted the principle of religious indifference for the basis of their legislation? And are we to admit them to be eminently tolerant? Yes, when they have closed our seminaries, plundered and destroyed our monasteries, converted our ancient churches into municipal offices, pronounced it illegal to form a holy pacific procession in honour of the mysteries of our faith which teach love and charity to all the world; when, like Thierry, the Burgundian king, they execute an insidious plan against the religious men who cultivate the desert, interfering with the private discipline of their monasteries, on the plea of having protected them, and when passive resistance is offered, declaring that they are too wise to desire to make martyrs, but that they will have men subjects, and accordingly commanding them to depart from their territories, justifying their sentence with an hypocritical profession, and then sending a band of soldiers to drag the servants of God by force from the altar, and to escort them on their road towards the land from which they originally came,—when all this is done, they betray, we are told by a modern author, "no want either of tolerance, or of the good sense from which that virtue springs." On the contrary, they have the authority of Rousseau for affirming, that all these measures emanate from the purest principles of patriotism and political wisdom; for in his Social Contract, that luminary of their system has encircled its intolerance with a kind of glory, by saying, that magistrates may justly punish men for opinions, as rendering them "insociable;" a principle

* Esd. ii. 4.

† Hugo S. Vict. Allegoriarum in Lib. Esther, Lib. ix. c. 13.

which is adopted by Paley, that father of the present Anglican philosophy. It is true, they have seized on all the treasures which the piety of former ages had appropriated to the relief and comfort of the poor: they have effaced all vestiges of the holy communities, which first cultivated the soil, abolished slavery, imparted the light of faith, preserved letters and arts, converted and civilized the inhabitants; but they have only done what was required to maintain uniformity and order. Their legal order reigns, like that of the conquerors described by Tacitus, "*ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*"

Moreover, under both systems, whether the religious or the political, the odium of such measures attaches itself unavoidably to the chiefs and founders. Jeremy Taylor, in his liberty of prophesying, makes an exception in the case of Catholics; and Milton, when arguing to show that the magistrate should not use force in matters of religion, adds, "but as for popery, why it also may not hence plead to be tolerated, I have much less to say. This is not a religion, but a Roman principality; and the consciences of the Papists, by voluntary servitude to man's law, have forfeited their Christian liberty:"* when it is considered what was necessarily implied, then, by a denial of toleration, the force of such evidence will be understood. The doctors of Lambeth and of Oxford need not be cited, as no one is ignorant of what they required; whereas, in ages of faith, intolerance and persecution were the work of men, who, in general, were the disgrace and refuse, not the true representatives, or choice spirits of Catholicism. If any individuals of illustrious merit failed, in respect to mercy, they were always sure to be recalled, by authority, to a sense of their obligations, as we remarked in the case of Hincmar. Search our annals from the beginning. In vain will you hope to find any parallel for the scene in which the learned and the noble of a great nation, — men the most esteemed for piety, admired for their professions of toleration, and re-

spected for the authority of their office, — are heard, with one voice, maintaining the justice of compelling, by force, a whole people to support an organized body of missionaries, who were to teach a new religion? Had Charlemagne such counsellors? Were such the notions of justice gathered in the school of Alcuin? When was it ever heard that the Catholic Church imposed tithes upon a people before they were converted? But it is beneath the dignity of learning to pursue the comparison. "Honour must be defended;" a man in authority is supposed, by Drexelius, to allege in defence of his harsh measures, "I hold a public station." "I beseech you," replies that learned Jesuit, "let us not be more subtle than is right. Stephen, and the apostles, and Christ, held a public station, and yet pardoned their most capital enemies."* Here was the model of Catholic tolerance; here was the spirit of all who had imbibed the spirit of the Church, and who might, with truth, be adduced as persons qualified to represent it: for of the philosopher, legislator, and statesman, in ages of faith, one might fearlessly say, in the words of the wise man, "His mouth was opened to wisdom, and the law of clemency was on his tongue." What page in their writings is not full of mildness and forbearance, of love and compassion, and the most tender expressions of a merciful and sympathising heart? I think, upon the whole, no dispassionate man, possessing any moderate degree of information, will venture to object to our arriving at the conclusion of a modern French critic, whose view of the literature of the middle ages cannot, at least, be accused of partiality in favour of Catholic times, and who, nevertheless, in speaking of them, says, "Reason had then its rights. It is not a boldness to be dated from yesterday in our modern Europe. The ideas of justice, and of tolerance, are not a creation of the philosophic spirit."†

* Drexelii de Vitiis Lingue, cap. lv.

† Villemain, Tableau de la Littérature au Moyen Age, i. 308.

* An Apology for Smectymnuns.



CHAPTER VII.

FROM beatitude we have, in brief space, journeyed; but on the new way where now I venture, again are heard, in the faint distance, blissful sounds, and voices exclaiming, "Love ye those who have wronged you." O, reader, thou needest not to ask, What tongues are these? This course reveals the multitude which adorned the Lamb that was slain, of which each one bore the image next his heart; for it was the custom at Rome, that, on the Sunday in Albis, which is the octave of Easter, figures of lambs in wax should be distributed by the archdeacon to the people in the Church, after the mass and communion, in order that the gentleness and meekness of the Saviour might never pass from their minds;* and these were quickly borne by devout pilgrims into all lands, with a zeal that oft awakened the jealousy of apostate states, which recognised and denounced them as the badge of enemies, though they could serve only to inculcate the patience which Tertullian calls the mother of mercy, the meek endurance, and heroic forgiveness of injuries, which had been practised by the merciful in ages of faith. Whether we consider the gracious and benign lessons in the ancient books inculcating that duty, or the beautiful examples of its fulfilment, with which the history of the middle ages abounds, it would be difficult to propose a more delightful path than that which now presents itself. The manner in which the duty of mercy towards an enemy is announced and enforced by the ancient writers is such, that a reader can hardly refrain from tears while he beholds the whole sum of wisdom abbreviated, as it were, in one word. "Nothing is more like God in nature," they remark, "than a man who is placable to his enemies; for God loved us while we were his enemies, and not only loved us but chose to die for us."† "We must endeavour," says the holy Cyprian, "to imitate the patience of God. Yes, brethren, the origin and greatness of patience must be traced from God himself; but O, how great is the patience of God!

He endures patiently the temples of the profane men, who outrage his majesty; He endures idols and sacrilegious ceremonies; He makes his sun to shine upon the evil, and upon the good, and his rain to descend on the just, and on the unjust: He makes the elements serve all men alike, the impious as well as the good; the winds blow, the springs burst forth, the harvests swell in waves, the grapes ripen, the trees cover themselves with fruit, the forests put on thick foliage, the meadows adorn themselves with the enamel of flowers. God delays vengeance, and patiently waits, that man may correct himself, and return to his Saviour. Such is the patience of the Father, and similar to it was that of the Son; for all the actions of Jesus Christ were characterized by patience, and by that divine evenness of soul of which nothing could interrupt the tranquillity. Accordingly, we find in the Scriptures that the patriarchs and prophets and just men who prefigured Jesus Christ are principally distinguished by this patience and evenness of soul, always the same. Such was that of Abel, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Joseph, of Moses, of David. Now, as patience is the good of Jesus Christ, impatience is the evil of the devil; and as patience belongs to him in whom Jesus Christ dwells, so he whose heart is open to the malice of the devil is the slave of impatience. Let us remount to the origin of the world. The devil could not endure that man should be created in the image of God; so the first man perishes, and causes the ruin of the human race. Adam, impatient to touch the forbidden fruit, finds death in his disobedience; Cain, before murdering his brother, could not endure his sacrifices and presents; Esau could not bear the least restraint upon his appetite; the Hebrew people could not endure the delay of Moses, and so lost God by their impatience. In the Church, also, it is impatience which makes heretics. Impatience raises up deadly hatreds, and makes people revolt, like the Jews, against the peace and charity of Jesus Christ."*

Now hear the devout contemplatist of the middle age:—"If," saith Louis of Blois,

* Baron. Ann. 692.

† Idiotæ Contemp. cap. 30.

* S. Cyprian de Patientiâ.

"when any difference hath given rise to bitterness between you and one of your brethren, you do not seek to be reconciled to him; if you do not forget the injury he has done to you, but, on the contrary, if you cherish a secret resentment or a less sincere affection for him, you are not a servant of Jesus Christ, you are not a Christian, you are abominable before God."*

Accordingly, when Pope Innocent III. commanded a general procession in Rome, on the fourth feria within the octave of Pentecost, for the peace of the universal Church, and especially for the deliverance of Spain from the hands of the Sarassins, he desired that no one should be excluded from joining it but such persons as cherished enmity against others. "To this procession," saith he, "let all be moved to come; nec ab ea se quisquam excuset præter illos qui habent inimicitias capitales."†

These guides argue to demonstrate the unreasonableness of resentment. "What do you accuse," says Drexelius, "in the man who injures you?—his will or his power, or both? You say both, and yet I will teach you to accuse neither: not his will, for that, without the power, could not injure you; not his power, for that is from God, and what injury does He commit against you? God punishes your sins, exercises your patience, multiplies your rewards,—and this you say is to injure you! But you reply, the man is malevolent. You always will look to man; but I wish you to look up to God."‡

"All men are your friends," said the seraphic father to his friars, "and no one is to be called an enemy; for they who are angry with you, and who persecute you, confer a greater benefit on your souls than any you could receive from the sweetest friend. All men, therefore, confer favours on you; and besides yourselves, you can have no enemy."§

This doctrine, in the middle ages, was not confined to the cells of friars; it reigned in the feudal tower, in the Tuscan villas, and in the palaces of Florence. "Qui acceptit injuriam," says Marsilius Ficinus to John Cavalcanti, "non ab inferente sed a seipso acceptit." It is the part even of a magnanimous man, through greatness, to take but little note of little things; and little and brief are all things temporal.||

* Louis de Blois, Guide Spirit. chap. i.

† Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xv. 181.

‡ Drexelli De Conformit. Voluntatis Hum. cum Divina, Lib. i. cap. 2.

§ Sermon iv.

|| Mars. Ficin, Epist. Lib. i.

The blessed Ælred, in his Mirror of Charity, thus explains the rule:—"Amicus qui non potest non diligere, diligatur in Deo: inimicus qui non propter se potest diligere, diligatur propter Deum; ille ex affectu, iste ex ratione."* This is taken for granted by St. Anselm, and therefore, in one of his profound works, the disciple asks, "Since Christians must have forgiven, why do they pray demitte nobis debita nostra? Or if they have not forgiven, why do they pray?" To whom St. Anselm replies, "He who doth not forgive, saith in vain 'Dimitte'; but he who forgiveth may pray, because this itself belongs to his forgiveness, that he should pray for it."†

Have you an enemy, or any one against whom you bear malice, and are you repairing to the church to give to the poor, to the clergy, to God? Hear what St. Augustin saith to you: "Leave your gift, leave the altar; go and be reconciled to your brother. God will not be angry because you defer to offer your gift: te querit Deus magis quam munus tuum."‡

Finally, St. Bernardine of Sienna tries to call into the service of mercy the interested feelings of the heart. "A merchant," saith he, "acts advisedly, who sells his wares to the highest bidder. Now you will receive a greater reward by showing mercy to your enemy than to your friend."§

"In the Christian combat," says St. Chrysostom, "not the striker, as in the Olympic contest, but he who is struck, wins the crown. This is the law in the celestial theatre, where angels are the lookers-on."||

The action of these principles in the middle ages may be considered in connexion with the manners of the religious, sublimely mild, and of persons engaged in the world, who may be supposed under the influence of the general spirit of society; and in both, the manner in which the virtue was exercised can hardly fail to strike every reader as furnishing additional evidence of the fact which we observed in the last book, that the Catholic morality involved graces wholly above nature in its fallen state, and of an origin superinduced, immediately divine. Stephen prayed for those who stoned him, "offering to God," adds St. Gregory Nazianzen, "something more than death, namely, moderation of mind and the love of his enemies." Even so: that renouncement of

* Ælred. Spec. Charitat. Lib. iii. c. 26.

† Cur. Deus Homo, Lib. i. cap. 19.

‡ S. August. Serm. xvi. de Verb. Dom.

§ S. Bernard. Senens. tom. iii.; de Beat. Serm. ix.

|| In. Epist. ad Rom.

the corrupt nature inherited from Adam, with all its malevolent and revengeful appetites, which was implied in this most generous passion, was unquestionably something more than death, which men truly magnanimous at all times had been inclined to accept and to despise. For who but the Creator that had first made man could restore him to a conformity with the eternal image, all trace of which had been so nearly obliterated by disorders utterly incurable without the intervention of a Divine hand? When was it ever heard, in the ancient world, that not merely a few philosophers, but whole nations existed, with whom it was considered vile and infamous to take vengeance? As well might you have expected to find men capable of existing without the custom of food, as without this nourishment, which seemed essential even as daily bread to their very animal life. There were, it is true, some isolated sages who entertained a higher notion of what was just and right. "If any one should disappoint you," says Epictetus, "bear it, and do not say this man was not what I thought him; for this is plebeian, and of a man cast out to external things *ἰδιωτικὸν γὰρ καὶ διαβεβλημένον πρὸς τὰ ἑκτός*.* Quanto quis major, tanto placabilis iræ, was a celebrated line; but in general even the wisest and best of the philosophers either expressly sanctioned or tacitly acquiesced in the principle and practice of retaliation. Sophocles himself, and in his old age, too, says, that to render evil for evil exposes no man to the anger of the gods.

Οὐδενὶ μοιρῖδια τίσις ἔρχεται,
ὧν προπάθη, τὸ τίναίν.†

You have the same doctrine delivered by the poetic moralist, who seems to aspire to the character of a philosopher even more than to that of a tragedian, and who ascribes the vindictive spirit to his most virtuous and interesting personages. When Eurystheus is brought in captive, Alcmena triumphs in the prospect of vengeance, and exhausts the power of words in expressing her hatred and her joy, exclaiming,

τί δὴ τόδ' ; ἔχθρους τοῖσιδ' οὐ καλὸν κρανεῖν.‡

The manners of the blessed meek and merciful appear to be condemned in ad-

vance by the Stagyrite, where he says, "Mildness seems to sin rather in the way of deficiency than of excess; for the mild person is not revengeful to punish, but rather compassionate to forgive."⁵

The idea of injury, affording an occasion for the practice of virtue, never seems to have occurred to any mind. At the most, you could only hope to find a disposition like that ascribed by the Corinthians to the Lacedæmonians, who esteemed it, they said, the same thing, neither to injure others, nor to be themselves injured;† and the Spartan Ephors are recorded to have actually punished a man for the singular reason that he was generally injured and insulted.‡ The principle of embracing all men, both friends and enemies, in one affection, and of showing generous courtesy to the latter, would probably have been condemned as repugnant to every idea of justice and honour. "Invite to your feast," says Hesiod, "him who lives nearest to you; invite your friend, but not your enemy." Achilles even says to Nestor, that he ought to participate in his hatred of Agamemnon, and not try to defend him:—

—— οὐδὲ τί σε χρή
τὸν φιλέειν, ἵνα μὴ μοι ἀπέχθῃαι φίλοντι.
Καλὸν τοι σὺν ἐμοὶ τὸν κήδειν ὅς κ' ἐμέ κήδῃ. §

But it would be useless to trace this contrast at greater length. Let us at once turn to the sources of historical information respecting Catholic manners in ages of faith, and proceed to illustrate their attribute of mercy in the order which I have already proposed.

When Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, what revenge did his disciples take? "See how they behave themselves," says a modern writer; "'and his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.' And was this all? And what was all this?" The forbearance of the Baptist's disciples, and the prayer of Stephen, can not only be paralleled in the history of the middle ages, but it is clear that it was strictly by them as living examples to all times that the minds of men were directed, and, as it were, tuned to action, when occasions permitted the exercise of corresponding deeds.

St. Peter of Verona, having had the

* Epicteti Sentent. cap. 30.

† Cædip. Colon. 228.

‡ Eurip. Herac.

* Aristot. Ethic. Lib. iv. c. 5.

† Thucyd. Lib. i. 17.

‡ Plutarch. Instit. Lac.

§ Lib. ix. 613.

courage to preach to the Manichæans, was doomed by them to die, and slain by an assassin as he passed through a wood on the road between Como and Milan. After receiving the blow of the hatchet, the blessed martyr was trying to write on the ground with his blood the first words of the Credo, when the murderer finished his work with a poignard. This wretch, Carin, was arrested and conducted to the prison of the podesta, whence he soon escaped, and fled to Forlì, near the Apennines, where he remained until remorse induced him to come forward and place himself in the hands of a Dominican friar. What revenge did he take? See how the order acted: "and the friar heard his abjuration, and then procured him the habit of a lay brother; the duties of which office he continued to discharge, in a spirit of penance, for many years, till his death."* Could any thing be more conformable to what was taught from the Mount?

When the assassin stabbed the pope's legate, Peter de Castelnau, he raised his head, and regarding the murderer, said, "I pray that God may pardon you as I pardon you!"† It was the same spirit in the admirable reply of Sir Thomas More to the men who condemned him:—"As St. Paul had part in the death of Stephen, and both are in heaven, so can you, my judges, and I, be equally saved by the mercy of the Lord."

St. Elphege, archbishop of Canterbury, on refusing to redeem himself by the property of the Church, the patrimony of the poor, was martyred by the Danes, who rushed upon him with sudden fury, and struck him with their swords to the earth; while others advancing, threw a shower of stones upon him. In his last agony he had strength enough to utter a prayer for himself and his murderers: "Lord Jesus, Son of God the Highest, who came through the Virgin's womb to save sinners, receive me and have mercy on them!" Do you mark how the tradition lives? You might learn it even from the tombs of the middle ages, as from that of Jerome Savina, in the church of St. Mary of Mercy at Venice.

The holy man, St. Berchaire, in the seventh century, was assassinated by a wretch named Daguin, whom he had befriended from youth. It was in the year 685, on Easter-day, after mass, when the saint had retired to take a little rest, that

the murderer fell upon him with a knife, and after giving him many wounds, fled, but was taken by some of the monks, and brought back to the place where St. Berchaire lay, who, remembering the words of Jesus upon the cross, said to him with his last breath, "My son, appease the anger of God by a long penitence; for my part, I freely forgive you; but go to Rome, my child, to receive pardon for what you have done from the holy father, who has power to pardon you." And with these words he died. The wretch Daguin was permitted accordingly to depart; and he set out for Rome, "but he has not yet returned," says the ancient author of this Passion.*

It is recorded of St. Gregory of Utrecht, by his disciple St. Liudger, that he practised, in its literal sense, that divine injunction, "Bless those that curse you." It was his daily practice to show peculiar kindness to those who injured him. St. Francis Regis, being struck by a certain libertine, fulfilled to the very letter the precept of our Lord, and presented him the other cheek saying meekly, "My brother, if you knew me, you would judge that I merit worse treatment."

The silence of Catholics under insult and injury was not, therefore, of the Homeric stamp, though it is thought that it must have been such by some modern writers. It did not resemble the silence of Ulysses, who disdained to answer Melanthius while meditating dreadful revenge, and who merely leaned his head on one side to avoid being struck by the ox's joint hurled at him by Ctesippus, at the same time grimly smiling in his heart at the thought of the coming vengeance. It was the silence of love and innocence, of real deep humility, abstraction from the world, and conformity to the divine will.

Godelef, a virgin martyr of the eleventh century, is one of the most celebrated saints of the Netherlands. In what did her eminent grace particularly consist? In this divine patience and sweetness under injury. Born in the vicinity of Boulogne-sur-Mer, and married at an early age to Bertulf, a Flemish gentleman resident in the diocese of Bruges, though possessing great personal attractions, yet scarcely was she under her husband's roof than she became the victim of barbarous ill-usage, both from him and his kindred. In consequence of his sudden dislike, she became a prisoner in his house. She was debarred

* Touron, Vie de S. D. Lib. v.
† Vaissette, Hist. du Languedoc.

* Desguerres, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 192.

from all food except bread and water—cursed, insulted, beaten; but so far from a murmur escaping her lips, her pillow by night and her face by day were bedewed with tears for his sake. For his conversion she hourly offered prayers to heaven; nor did once a hint of the barbarity she experienced reach her own family, till she was expelled from his roof, and forced to look to it for support. The bishop, being apprised of the fact, compelled the husband to receive her back and promise amendment; but immediately on her return, he meditated her death. Finding that starvation would not answer his impatience, he directed his confidential domestics to strangle her. At midnight she was called up by the murderers; and as she left her chamber, in obedience, as she supposed, to her husband's commands, she was strangled and quietly laid on her bed; and when, the next morning, she was found dead, the report was spread that she had destroyed herself. A recent historian, in allusion to this saint, is constrained to renounce all the prejudices of his sect, and to admit that here indeed canonization was deserved; for no one ever so returned good for evil—none ever so devoutly prayed for enemies—none ever wore so smiling a countenance amidst the most dreadful privations, amidst the wreck of every earthly hope, when life must necessarily have been a burden.

We find another moving example in the annals of the Capuchins. Mathieu de Bassio, one of the first fathers of the reform in the order of St. Francis, having been cast into prison at Macerata by John of Fano, provincial minister, who subsequently embraced the same holy profession which he at first persecuted, was unwilling to avail himself of the good offices of the merciful who sought to deliver him. A certain priest of that family, being greatly displeased at the severity with which the prisoner was treated, went to him secretly, and promised to open the doors of his prison during the night, that he might escape; but Mathieu indignantly refused, and rebuked the pious brother, saying, "The cross of Christ is not so horrible that a man of faith should fear it, or seek to avoid it; but it is, on the contrary, a good which he should receive with open arms whenever it is offered to him. You advise me not well; far be from me such an unworthy action. Cease to recommend things which savour not of God, lest you should seem to despise that divine wisdom which is offered to me, that

it may be glorified in my cross." The priest, discovering from these words the admirable perfection of the man, and finding it useless to attempt further to persuade him, resolved to adopt other means; and for that purpose proceeded to Camerino, in order to excite the duchess, Catherine Ciboia, to procure his deliverance; but before her letters could take effect, the brethren of that house had convinced him that it was his duty to consult for the general good, and, after the example of the Prince of the apostles, to leave a prison of which the doors were thrown open to him; so that, after a confinement of three months, he recovered his liberty. His interview, shortly afterwards, with the Duchess of Camerino, presented a memorable instance of charity on one side, and of forgiveness on the other. While that illustrious woman received the holy man with all the tenderness of a pious mother, and interrogated him respecting his sufferings, he assured her that the Provincial had done nothing but with the best intentions, and that whatever hardship he might have undergone was owing, not to the fault of that man, but to some other cause, which he attempted to explain in such a manner as to absolve him from all suspicion of evil.*

As a rule of general manners, the maxim of St. Augustin, "*Inimicitiae vitandæ cautissime, ferendæ æquissime, finiendæ citissime*," was so well observed in ages of faith, that the latter part was not deemed accomplished unless the very letter of the evangelic precept was complied with; of which we have a striking instance in the contest which arose between Nicetas Patricius and St. John, patriarch of Constantinople, respecting the affairs of the poor, which the former was accused of neglecting; for after high words, a separation between them, without a reconciliation, having taken place, towards evening the patriarch sent to inform him that the sun was about to set. Patricius, moved by the remonstrance, returned to the patriarch, when they embraced and became friends as before.†

A Spanish ecclesiastic published a bitter pasquinade against Pope Pius V., and the magistrates had condemned him to the penalty which the law awarded; but this holy pontiff sent for the prisoner, and gave him full pardon, adding, "My friend, when you observe, in future, any defect in my

* *Annales Capucinatorum*, an. 1525.

† *Drexellii de Vitiis Linguae*, cap. 10.

conduct, I pray you to warn me of it, that I may correct myself.*

Urban IV., to whom the Church is indebted for the great festival of the adorable Eucharist, had occasion to evince the same spirit. Having been sent, while only archdeacon of Liege, from Lyons into Germany, by Pope Innocent IV., he was violently seized by three gentlemen of the diocese of Treves, who threw him into prison and took possession of his horses, money, and other effects. When elevated to the chair of St. Peter, he received a petition from these gentlemen, offering to make restitution, but desiring to be dispensed, from going in person to Rome to receive absolution, in regard to the perils of the journey. Urban IV. immediately gave commission to the prior of the Dominicans at Coblenz to absolve them, and charged him to say that he freely forgave them both the insult and the injury, only enjoining on them to refrain in future from similar acts.†

As connected with the piety of the religious in the middle ages, let us take but two more examples of the forgiving spirit, and mark its action in youth and age, in the student of Cluni and in the venerable and renowned master of Citeaux. Odo was an innocent and pacific lad in the school of Cluni. "He used," says an ancient writer, "to be insulted and persecuted by some wicked youths, of whom Wido was the prince, instigating them to injure him." On a certain occasion, one of them replied, 'What avails it, when we cannot provoke him to anger? Besides, he is more learned than any of us, and he is always ready to teach me whatever I desire to learn. I fear lest he should at length refuse to assist me, if I continue daily to persecute him.' To whom Wido answered, 'He is not what you imply; for brother Odo is of that character, that he will bear not only these things, but much worse, and afterwards he will be ready cheerfully to teach you whatever you may wish.'‡

When such mercy and patience belonged to the character of Catholic youth, what may we not expect from the holy men who were raised up to instruct and edify it?

The Epistle which is placed the first among these of St. Bernard, which begins, "Satis et plusquam satis," is a most ad-

mirable model of charity. It is addressed to his nephew Robert, a youth who had deserted the Cistercian order for Cluny. "Sufficient and more than sufficient time I have waited, my dearest son Robert, to observe whether the piety of God would vouchsafe to regard your soul by itself, or mine through you,—yours by inspiring it with compunction, and mine by filling it with joy on your account; but since I have been frustrated hitherto in my hopes, I am no longer able to conceal my grief, to repress my anxiety, to dissemble my sadness; therefore, against the order of right, I who have been wounded, am obliged to recall him who wounded me, despised, him who despised me, injured, him who injured me. For grief does not deliberate, does not blush, does not consult reason, does not fear the loss of dignity, is ignorant of measure and of order. But you will say, I have never injured or despised any one, but rather it is I who was despised and hurt, and I only fled from him who did me wrong. Was is not better to yield to a persecutor than to resist him? to fly a striker than to strike him again? Rightly; I admit it. It is not to contend that I have begun this, but that I might remove contentions. The fault is in him who persecutes, not in him who flies the persecutor. I do not deny it; I omit what is done; I do not examine why or how it was done; I do not discuss faults, I do not remember injuries; I only speak of what I have more at heart. Alas! wretched me, that I should be deprived of you! that I should not see you! and that I should live without you! for whom to die would be to me to live; and without whom to live would be to die! I ask not then why you went away, but I complain that you do not return. Only come, and it shall be peace; return, and there will be full satisfaction. Certainly it was my fault that you departed; for I was too austere to a delicate youth, and too hardly did I treat a tender plant: for, as well as I can remember, this is what you used to object to me. That shall not be imputed to you: I might perhaps offer some excuse for myself, and appeal to the Scripture, which attests the necessity of discipline for youth; but it was, as I have said already, my fault that caused you to depart; but from henceforth it will begin to be also yours, if you do not spare the penitent, and grant indulgence to him who confesses; because, though I might have been indiscreet towards you, I could never have been

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv.

† Bullar. Ord. Predic. tom. i.

‡ Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 28.

malevolent; but if you should fear this very indiscretion for the future, you should know that I am no more what I was, than you are what you were. Changed, you shall find me changed. Do you wish to be free from all fault? return. If you acknowledge your fault, I pardon you. Do you also pardon me when I acknowledge mine. Fearlessly come whither humility calls you, whither charity draws you; you fled from one that was severe; return to one that is gentle. I have known your mind, that can more easily be moved by love than by fear. And if any one should wonder that a simple, modest, and timid boy should dare to desert his own, and his place, and his vow, against the will of his brethren and the command of his master, let him also wonder that David, and Solomon, and Samson, should have been betrayed into error. When man could be deceived so as to lose the country of felicity, why should it seem strange that a tender youth should be enticed from a place of horror and a vast solitude. A vain prudence represented holy discipline as indiscretion; and the credulous boy is tempted to follow the seducer; he is received with honours, and preferred above his equals. But my dear little son, consult your own heart, because you know yourself better than another can know you. Ask yourself, why you departed? why you left your order, your brethren, your place, and me, who am nearer in flesh, and nearer in spirit? If it was that you might live in more perfection, be at rest, for then you have not looked back; glory with the Apostle, and say that you have looked to the things before you, and to the palm of glory; but if otherwise, be not lifted up, but fear since you have looked back, you have prevaricated, you have apostatized. And this I say, my son, not to confound you, but that I may admonish you as a dearest son; for if you have many teachers in Christ, yet you have not many fathers, for I have begotten you in religion; I have nourished you with milk as a little one, and I was about to feed you with bread, if you had waited till you were grown up. You have been torn from me, but I can never forget you; not indeed bone of my bone, or flesh of my flesh, but the joy of my heart, the fruit of my spirit, the crown of my hope, and as I feel, the half of my soul."

This is styled the miraculous letter; for he dictated it sitting in the open air, as was his custom, without the monastery, and a shower of rain coming on, the person who

wrote proposed to cover the sheet, but the holy father forbade him, saying, "It is the work of God, write on:" the scribe continued to write, and no rain fell upon the letters.

But let us consider the more ordinary action of mercy in the forgiveness of injuries, and view it in the manners of men engaged in secular life. *Nunquam injuria accepta ad ulciscendum ductus.* These words of Helgald, which refer to Robert, king of the Franks, might be used, with equally strict historical justice, when speaking of the emperors Lewis and Henry, of our Edward the Confessor, and generally of all sovereigns who corresponded to that type of a Christian king which the holy Church canonized in the person of St. Lewis. They might be applied also to many who assisted in their councils, who, like Andrew Doria, always chose to forget rather than revenge an injury. When St. Adalhard, after seven years' banishment in the island of Heri, was restored to favour by the emperor and recalled, on entering the palace he beheld the nobles, who were his enemies, confused, and evincing marks of shame for what they had done against him; but he prevented their asking forgiveness, and with downcast eyes thus sweetly spoke: "O emperor, and ye princes, nothing happens in the world without the judgment of God. If God hath punished us for our sins, why should that affect you? We ourselves must see to it. You could have done nothing without God's permission. Let us now only obey his orders; forgive, and you shall be forgiven; which I do first, and do you follow me." Then all embraced him, and the man of God proceeded to his monastery, which he had never hoped to see again.*

When Louis XII. succeeded to the crown, he marked with a red cross the names of all those who had most sensibly disoblged him during the reign of his predecessor, saying, "that he did so only to cancel their offence by the remembrance of the 'blood of Jesus Christ.'" And he left an eternal monument of this action, in a medal on which was the figure of the cross, with these words under it: "*Rubra crux salutis signum albaque Francorum.*"

Antonio Galatea, in his beautiful description of the country of Otranto, mentions a still more remarkable instance. "The city of Galatana," saith he, "took

* Vita S. Adalhardi apud Mabillon Acta S. Ord. S. Bened. Secul. iv. p. 1.

the side of Joan, queen of Naples, when the Japygian land was laid waste by James Caldora. After their deaths the whole country fell into the power of John Antonio, who condemned my father, as an enemy, to banishment; but he on hearing the sentence, wrote to him in these terms: 'Having received no injury from you good prince, I resisted you to the utmost of my power; for I thought to keep my faith in obeying the orders of the queen, whom Naples and the greatest part of the kingdom followed. Whether she justly adopted Alphonso, or afterwards justly abdicated, it was for her to examine. Some followed the side of the mother; others, of the son. We must all now admit the justice of that cause, for which God has decided. You have conquered. Do not vex those who are conquered. I ask no pardon from you, for I have not sinned: this only I pray and beseech, that you would not suppose I acted from any hatred against you, or through ambition.' These words so pleased the good prince, that if he had before any anger against him, it changed into love; and as long as my father lived, he was always one of his dearest friends, till the day of his heroic death, suffered for the truth of God.*

But it is where the offence was more immediately personal, that the forgiveness practised by those who studied in the book of mercy, appears most sublime. Memorable was the conduct of the Duchesse de Montmorency, who founded, in several convents of the visitation, places for the gratuitous maintenance of the daughters of those families at Toulouse, which had been instrumental in causing the death of her husband, supposing that some of them might wish to retire from the world as she herself had done.†

Pasquier says, that the President De Thou was always ready to be reconciled with those who had offended him, or rather, he adds, "I am wrong in saying reconciled, for he did not know what it was to hate any one."

The charity, patience, and forbearance, which reigned in all domestic relations, in ages of faith, presents a theme which is not undeserving of attention. If, in a moment of haste, a Joinville had uttered an angry word to the meanest of his servants, before the setting of the sun he

would express his contrition. There was none of that clamour and wrath, which so often disturbs the houses of the moderns. Balthazar Gracian, in his instruction for nobles, relates that Don Lopez de Acusia, putting on his armour before a battle, desired his squires to adjust his helmet better, as it hurt his ears; but they assuring him that it was right, he went forth, and on his return, taking it off, his ear came with it; but he only said, gently, "Did I not say truly that it was ill put on."

An English traveller in Portugal describing his visit to the Marquis of Penalvas, and observing the multitude of persons whom that beneficent family loved to harbour, says, "that he found Donna Henriquetta seated on the steps which led up to the great pavilion, whispering to some of her favourite attendants, who, like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, were continually giving their opinion of whatever was going forward." Such communications, though conveyed in the verse of Sophocles, would not be tolerated in society, constituted upon modern principles; but, in Catholic manners, patience and condescension entered into the characters of mercy. No where, if you will hear the same writer, is the sacred precept of honouring your father and mother so cordially observed as in that nation. The dutiful, affectionate attention of young persons to their parents, which struck him as so truly amiable, was an essential part of Catholic manners; yet it is no less observable, that the meekness which entered into the composition of the merciful sweetened all authority, whether of public or domestic character. St. Bernard writes to the Countess of Blois, excusing the faults of her son, on the ground of his youth, and reminding her that they must not prevent her from evincing the affection of a mother. "You must act towards him," he says, "in a spirit of gentleness and soothing fondness, for by so doing he will be more excited to good works than if you exasperated him by irritations and reproof."*

It is remarkable, that through all the relations of life, the maxims and traditions of chivalry co-operated with religion in this respect; for we may remember, it was an axiom of honour, universally received even in the world, that patience was the characteristic of noble manners.

We have already had occasion to observe, that in regard to the legal punishment of

* Anton. Galatei de Situ Japygim liber in Theaur. Antiq. Italiz ix.

† Marzollier, Vie de Mde. de Chantal, ii. 156.

* Epist. ccc.

enemies, and of persons who had committed injustice, the mercy of men in the middle ages was frequently exercised in a most ingenious and striking manner. Alexander, Patriarch of Jerusalem, having been robbed by one of his notaries, who fled into Egypt, hearing that this man was captured by banditti, sent a large sum of money to redeem him ; so that it became a proverb, "Nothing more useful than to injure Alexander."^{*}

Alfonso XI. besieging Algeziras, in which famine began to reign, a Sarassin, leaving the city, stole into the Spanish camp, and was discovered with concealed weapons, for the purpose of assassinating him. All cried out, that justice should be executed upon such a wretch ; but Alfonso sent him in safety to the Sarassin king, in Africa, as one who had loved his country more than his own life."[†]

Evidently, these manners of merciful men, in ages of faith would have interfered with what is termed, the course of justice, and prevented the law from exercising such an influence upon society, as it afterwards came to produce ; and yet nothing is clearer than that they were in conformity with the spirit of the Christian religion, as interpreted by the holy fathers. "If any one," says St. Jerome, "commit adultery, homicide, sacrilege, and thus become debtor of ten thousand talents, and ask our forgiveness, if we, on account of the contumely of the deed, be implacable, shall we not ourselves be justly cast into prison, to pay what we may owe to the last farthing ?"[‡] Accordingly, by the canon law it was taught, that no one should apply to magistrates to seek revenge, but purely to have justice maintained for the general interest of the state."[§]

"If you wish, through hatred, the legal punishment of men who have done you an injury, you will sin mortally," says Guy de Roze, in his *Doctrinal de Sapience*. When the injury was political, and kings the object, there was no exception. Such manners and principles were strangely at variance with those adopted in latter times, and with the spirit and letter of many parliamentary acts in England during the reigns of Elizabeth and her successors, when men, not content with the severity of penal laws, formed associations, and

bound themselves as members of such fraternities, to pursue unto death such and such persons. Nothing, in fact, can be more striking than the contrast between the effects of the Catholic religion, and those of the reformed creed, upon the ideas adopted with regard to the endurance or punishment of wrong,—between the philosophy of cruel, cold, formal men, righteous in words, and those habits of thinking of the miserable with gentleness, of cherishing mild, pitying thoughts, whatever might be the crime and shame,—of erring, not in harsh severity, but in tears and patience. But when impatience was religion, it is not surprising that revenges should have been law. It is clear, from history, that all the old Christian notions of mercy and forgiveness, on supernatural grounds, had passed away before the education of the moderns. It would be in vain to deny it: they were all antiquated, exploded notions, though there was a decent reserve of formality maintained, in regard to the texts of the bible. General merit or expediency, previous services or regard for the interest of other parties, natural benevolence or magnanimity, might weigh much, when it was a question of abating punishment ; but neither kings nor people would have relaxed one iota from what they deemed justice, by seeing their Saviour suspended on the cross. Ah ! they did well to take down his image from their tribunals, seeing that it had been so completely effaced from their hearts. With them, as with the Gentiles of old, it was a pious duty to avenge the slain ; and the public mind was convinced, that it would be wholly useless to consult the living, since, through regard for the dead alone, it would be impossible for kings to pardon. Let us hasten back to the days of the blessed merciful. The sovereign pontiffs repeatedly set an example to the world of uniting forgiveness of their enemies with a just regard to the interests of society. When Peter de Corbiere, the anti-pope, who had caused ruin and desolation in so many cities of Italy, had been vanquished and taken, he was sent to Avignon, where the pope whom he had excommunicated and deposed was then residing. "The said Peter being patient," says Bernard Guido, "was clemently and mercifully received, but was placed under a decent custody, that it might be proved whether he would walk in darkness or in light. At present, while I am writing these lines, he is there treated as a familiar friend, but guarded as an

^{*} Sophron. *Pratum Spirituale*, cap. 34.

[†] Roderici Santii *Hist. Hispanie*, pars iv. c. 12.

[‡] S. Hieron. *Hom. Lib. iii. Com. in Matt. xviii.*

[§] Gregorius Tholosanus, *Præluia Jurisconsulti*, Lib. iv. 8.

enemy.* Balthazar Cossa, formerly called John XXIII., had languished, during three years, in a prison in Germany, when Leonard de Datis, general of the Dominicans, and apostolic legate, at the head of many illustrious Florentines addressed the reigning Pope, to beg that he might obtain his liberty. Whether Martin V. had already treated with the Count Palatin for the deliverance of the prisoner, or whether, as Ciaconius, and some other writers affirm, he obtained his deliverance from this prince by force of money, certain it is, that the prison opened its gates to him; and on arriving in the neighbourhood of Parma, he found many of his ancient friends, who received him with respect; some of whom, even through affection or self-interest, entreated him to resume the pontifical habit;—that is, to rekindle the flames of schism and war: but misfortune had changed Balthazar Cossa into another man. His resolution was taken, and, without intimating it to any of his friends, he proceeded almost alone to Florence, without providing any security for his person. On arriving, he went immediately to the Dominican convent of S. Maria Novella, where Martin V. was then residing, threw himself at the pope's feet, implored his mercy, and recognised him as the sole true vicar of Jesus Christ. A step so edifying, and so little expected, drew tears from the eyes of every one present. The pope, more moved than all besides, after having raised him up, and given him a thousand testimonies of sincere affection, did all in his power to alleviate the contrast between his present and past condition, receiving him into the number of cardinals, making him dean of the sacred college, and ordering, that in all public ceremonies, Cossa should be the nearest to his person, and placed on a seat higher than all others but his own.† Nor were the local rulers of the Church slow to imitate these examples. When Gautier, commander of the Florentine troops, who styled himself duke of Athens, had established his power as a tyrant over that restless people, and when they sought to cast off his cruel yoke, he attempted to inveigle three hundred of the first citizens into the citadel, under pretence of conferring with them on the state of the republic;

but, in fact, with a design of cutting them off at once, which was discovered by the people, who, in a fury of resentment, rose in arms, and besieged him in the fortress, which was defended by his satellites. What the conspiracies of private men, and the violence of an armed multitude, had failed to effect, was accomplished by the prudence of Angelo Acciajoli, bishop of Florence. He saved the blood of the citizens, put an end to the tyranny, but, what is most remarkable, saved also the life of the tyrant, who surrendered the fortress to him, and confided his person to his hands. The bishop provided both for his safety, and for that of the republic; within the domains of which the fallen despot was never more seen.*

These are certainly admirable examples; yet, in point of poetic interest, they yield to those instances of mercy to personal enemies exercised in war, which we find recorded in all our ancient heroic chronicles. Plato observes, that it is absurd to insult the dead body of the slain, regarding it as your enemy, ἀποπαμένον τοῦ ἐχθροῦ; the real enemy, that is, the soul, having then flown away, and disappeared.† This was all that he could urge in favour of the dead; so little idea had even the philosopher of arguing on the absurdity of hating any one, or of pursuing any one with implacable rage. The men whom he addresses would have killed the soul of their enemy, if possible; and so he only shows them that, as that cannot be done, it is useless to expend their fury upon the inanimate carcass. The Catholic hero, like Guize, or even Richard of the lion's heart, unlike the Homeric, seeks not revenge in death. He sleeps in peace when his wrongs are forgiven, and repaid with benefits: then it is that his surviving friend may exclaim, with Deiphobus, My companion lies not unhonoured—

——— ἀλλὰ ἔφημι
εἰς Ἀΐδης περ ἰόντα πηλάρταο κρατερροῖο
γῆθήσῃ κατὰ θυμὸν ἐπεὶ ῥά οἱ ἅπαντα πομπῇ—

followed not by the soul of a slaughtered enemy, but by the prayer of a contrite and forgiven foe.‡

When Earl Percy, in Chevy Chase, takes the dead Earl Douglas by the hand exclaiming,

* Tractatur ut familiaris, sed custoditur ut hostia. Bern. Guid. in Vita Joan. xxii.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xviii.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

† Plato de Repub. liv. v.

‡ Il. xiii. 415.

"O, Christ ! my very heart doth bleed with sorrow for thy sake,"

we have the new morality of the supernatural law commemorated and displayed before our eyes with an Homeric simplicity. Indeed, that acts of such forgiveness emanated purely from the religious principle, often extorted by the ingenious violence of holy men in ages of faith, and that they were still combated in human breasts by the sentiments of the old nature is shown by poets. Thus, when De Wilton spares Marmion, he expressly admits, that it was in remembrance of his vow to spare his greatest enemy for Austin's sake: for hearken to his own tale :

"Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid;
My hand the thought of Austin staid;
I left him there alone.
O, good old man ! e'en from the grave
Thy spirit could thy master save."

That sooner or later, even bold and desperate men were enabled to receive and practise the doctrine of the cross, may be inferred from the confession of Mortham to Matilda, when relating the history of his own life, and saying, "Deep were my plans of vengeance at that time ;

But humble be my thanks to heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts has given ;
And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught
Mercy by mercy must be bought."

When Alhama was besieged by the Moors, the marquis of Cadiz and the Christians being in the last distress, the marquis applied to his old hereditary enemy, Don Juan de Gusman, duke of Medina Sidonia, for assistance, and this gallant knight, forgetting all animosity, hastened in person to his succour, declaring, that the loss of the marquis would be grievous to all Christendom. When the duke had defeated the Moors, and entered the town, the Christians, who had endured the horrors of the siege resembled skeletons rather than living men. It was a noble and gracious sight to behold the meeting of those two ancient foes, the duke of Medina Sidonia and the marquis of Cadiz. When the marquis beheld his magnanimous deliverer approaching, he melted into tears: all past animosities only gave the greater poignancy to present feelings of gratitude and admiration ; they clasped each other in their arms, and from that time forwards, were true and constant friends.

These are instances of individual mercy ;

but we have proof of the same spirit dictating the conduct of a whole people in ages of faith. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, Miladan, governor of Dalmatia and Croatia, profiting by the troubled state of Hungary, had raised himself as a tyrant over that whole country, which he oppressed with the utmost ferocity. Knowing no law but his own will, the clergy and the poor were his victims : his avarice had no bounds ; his pirate vessels even ravaged the coast of Italy ; while at home, with the utmost tranquillity he saw flow the blood and tears of the enslaved people. The blessed Augustin de Gazothes, who then ruled the Church of Zagrab, had the courage to admonish repeatedly this tyrant, who was rather a monster than a man ; but though all his efforts were in vain, he said publicly, that he would never cease to pray for his conversion. The justice of God at length overtook him : his own brother Paul, at the head of the chief nobles, contrived to catch him in their nets. Abandoned by his satellites, and loaded with chains, he was conducted before the king of Hungary who had the magnanimity to spare his life, content to shut him up in a close prison, in the city of Zagrab. After bearing his irons in impatience a long time, he at length escaped from prison, and passed a considerable interval in flight from one city to another, till Providence ordained that he should fall into the hands of the Traguriens, his mortal enemies. The remembrance of all the evils which he had inflicted upon them was sufficient to excite a spirit of vengeance, and his obstinacy in impiety had hitherto remained invincible ; yet it pleased Heaven to work a miracle in his favour, making of this great sinner an illustrious penitent, and inspiring, at the same time, his enemies with sentiments not only of humanity and compassion towards him, but of love and tenderness ; for as much as they had detested Miladan proud and cruel, they loved him humble and converted. It was remembered how the holy bishop of Zagrab used to protest that he would never cease to pray for his conversion ; and now, when they witnessed the humiliation of their ancient persecutor, they recognised the power of that holy man's intercession, and believed that they were the instruments of God in showing mercy to the conquered.*

It is remarked, by ancient writers of Normandy, that at Rouen, the criminals who

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. St. Dom. tom. ii. liv. ix.

had been delivered by the chapter of the cathedral on the festival of the ascension, and their accomplices, who had fled, or taken sanctuary, were thenceforth as secure from being troubled or reproached by the friends and relations of those whom they had slain or injured, as they were from being called to further account by the civil authority. Thus, in 1370, John and Thomas Baratte, after killing Gueroult, having been delivered by the privilege, used to walk publicly through the streets of Rouen, without receiving any reproach or insult from the friends of the dead;* and similarly, Guillaume Dangiens, accomplice of Guillaume Yon, rescued, by the same power, from the death to which he had been sentenced, for slaying Colin de la Chapelle, at Pavilly, returned to his dwelling, trusting in that act, married, and became father of many children; and from the day of his return till his death, lived peaceably in the said town, exercising his trade as a tanner, and never was troubled or reproached by the friends of the dead, or reminded by them of having committed that crime.† In the annals of the Capuchins, we find an instance still more beautiful. Baptist Faventinus had been, for a long time, the head of all the proscribed and infamous men of the province of Æmilia, feared as a monster rather than as a human being, of such strength, that, seizing a man with one hand in the waist, he could hold him elevated in the air, and having the right arm so long, that a sword which he wielded seemed a spear. He had won renown in war, under the duke of Urbino; but the natural ferocity and turpitude of his mind reduced him to the ranks of the most flagitious men. Having, however, by accident heard Bernardine Senensis preach at Florence, he was suddenly illuminated by the grace of heaven, and converted to a religious life. St. Bernardine, to whom he had immediately applied for admission into the order of Capuchins, after finishing his Lent sermons, prepared to return from Florence to his province of Bologna, and apprised the new convertite, that if he were sincere in his professions, he must be ready to accompany him on foot, and carry a sack of books upon his shoulders. The once ferocious and haughty outlaw desired now nothing so much as suffering and humiliation; so they set out together. Bernardine took the road to Faenza, the native town of his companion, and passed through the towns of Crispino, Brexillo, and Fulminiana; in all

of which Baptist had committed murders; so that at every step he had reason to expect death, if not the horrible fate of Altabellus, the robber and assassin, who when taken at Aqua Sparta, was consigned by the duke of Borgia to those whose sons and fathers he had slain, when, to the disgrace of Umbria, cruelty was so ferociously avenged;* but as he desired to suffer in expiation of his crimes, he pursued the way with intrepidity. As he still wore his secular dress of silk, the inhabitants were not long in recognising him; and, in fact, he confessed his name to each wondering interrogator, who asked if the friar's companion really were he—the terrible outlaw? No one, however, the change of the right hand of the Most High being visible, attempted to interrupt them; so they arrived at Faenza, and the convent received them within its walls. The number of enemies whom he might fear in this town could not be told; but, nevertheless, on the following day, by the desire of Bernardine, he went forth and perambulated the city with a rope round his neck. He first went to the house of a widow whose husband he had slain, and threw himself at her feet, imploring forgiveness. She burst into a flood of tears, and pardoned him on the spot. In like manner he proceeded to the houses of all the other persons whom he had injured; and in every instance he met with the blessed merciful. This sanguinary criminal excited only commiseration and astonishment, and not a word was uttered against him; but all wept and gave praise to God for having spared a sinner and given his soul grace. In process of time he was received among the novices of that convent, when the wonderful transformation of his nature became manifest to all; but he still continued to furnish occasions, from time to time, for the merciful to exercise heroic forgiveness; of which the annals of the Capuchins relate one remarkable instance:—Among the other victims whom he had slain at Faenza was a certain nobleman, of whom two sons survived, bent on revenging his death. These young men, on hearing of the murderer's conversion, persisted no less in their resolutions with regard to him, and conspired to take his life; for which purpose, accompanied with two others, they came armed to the convent, rang the gate-bell, and desired to speak with Baptist; but the porter, perceiving their arms, and doubtless somewhat that startled him in their looks, hastened to apprise the guardian that there was cause to

* Floquet, *Hist. du Privilège de St. Romain*, i. 102.

† *I. d. i.* 104.

• Leandri Alberti *Descript. Italie*, 143.

suspect danger; who called Baptist into his presence, and informed him of the arrival of these persons demanding to see him in so suspicious a manner. Baptist asked leave to look through the grate, that he might ascertain if he knew them; and the first glance convinced him of the critical position in which he stood. Sooth they were the sons thirsting to avenge their father's murder. Nevertheless he begged that the door might be set open; and having obtained consent, he presented himself, saying, "Lo, I am the traitor, the impious Baptist, the murderer of your father! Punish me as I deserve—I merit far worse than death!"

Reader, you have seen enough of the ages of faith to know already what follows. The youths are in greater concern than the suppliant; it would be hard to tell who sheds most tears. They are clasped in each other's arms; and the formidable avengers, who came breathing slaughter, by one hint at the mercy and grace of Christ, are thenceforth the devoted friends, whose only thoughts are love and peace for evermore.*

After such a scene, one would rather say nothing can propose a comment. It is clear that the dearest friends in ages of faith had been often those who would have been the objects of immortal hatred in unblest hearts; it is clear that the difficulty of this virtue gave it only additional charms in the eyes of men; so that heroic protection was often extended to an enemy, which might have been withheld, through neglect or forgetfulness, from one who had never been seen in the position of a foe. It was the saying popular at Rome during the pontificate of Pius V., that if any one wished to gain some favour from him, he ought to begin by doing him an injury. In fine, what more than all proves the divine source from which this blessed mercy of forgiveness emanated, we discover its action in cases where it could be accompanied and assisted by no power of the imagination, and under circumstances which must have rendered its acquisition wholly beyond the reach of human efforts, when it could only have been exercised from the solitary, interior desire of pleasing God.

Visit with me once more the savage rock, the castle safely walled and moated round about, its dungeons under ground, and its thick towers, "that never told tales, though they have heard and seen what might make dumb things speak." There the mute and faded smiles of captive youth, when the rust

of heavy chains has gangrened its sweet limbs, and all its mild words from first to last attest, that it has no feeling towards its foes but resignation and forgiveness!

Silvio Pellico is an author who may with strict propriety be cited as illustrating the character of the middle ages; for where the same faith exists, all separation and difference of time ceases; and as a Catholic of the tenth century might be taken for one of our contemporaries of the same faith, so any book which is written at the present day in the genuine spirit of Catholicism might be supposed to date from an epoch of the olden time. He says, in the memoirs of his own captivity, that the irritation which ruled him since his condemnation had made him irreligious, but that the virtue of his poor young fellow-prisoner, Oroboni, who always defended and forgave his enemies, at length influenced him to follow in that divine track. "Then," says he, "when I could again pray sincerely for all the world, and abandon all hatred, my doubts as to faith vanished. *Ubi charitas est amor, Deus ibi est.*" This young count, Antonio Oroboni, condemned with Pellico to hard imprisonment in the fortress of Spielberg, in Moravia, a model of piety and charity, died at length in that prison; and the description of his death is so completely in harmony with the characters of the middle ages represented in history, that I have no scruple in citing it to illustrate them:—"What a shudder," says Pellico, "ran through my veins when they told me he was dead! I heard the voice and steps of those who came for the body. I saw from my window the cart which was to bear him to the cemetery: it was drawn by two of the convicts; four guards followed it. I accompanied with my eyes this sad convoy to the spot. It entered the enclosure; it stopped at the corner of the wall—there was the grave. How often had he said to me, while looking at the spot from his window, 'I must accustom myself to the idea of resting there; but I confess that it is repugnant to me. I could be more easily resigned to death on one condition: if I could but return once more under my paternal roof, embrace my father's knees, hear one word of benediction, and die!' He sighed and added, 'If this cup cannot pass, O my God, thy will be done!' The last morning of his life, he said, on kissing the crucifix which Kral presented to him, 'Thou who wert God hadst nevertheless a horror of death; and thou saidst, '*Si possibile est, transeat à me calix iste!*' Pardon if I say it likewise; but I repeat also thy other words,

* *Annales Capucinatorum*, an. 1562.

'Verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu.' He died on the 13th of June, 1828. A few hours before expiring, he spoke of his octogenarian father, and wept; adding, 'But why weep for the happiest of those who are dear to me, since he is on the eve of rejoicing me in the abode of eternal peace?' His last words were, 'I pardon my enemies from my heart.' How like the youngest prisoner in that song of Chillon!—

'And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot;—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise.' "

Such are the death-scenes in the dungeons

of the middle age—such is the testimony of history respecting the action of blessed mercy towards the objects of men's fear or hate! It is the same spirit wherever the Catholic religion exists, wherever lips have been trained from childhood to kiss the crucifix. A whole world of vengeful and cruel tragedy has been annihilated in the human heart, and a new creation effected there. What more new to it than mercy to the foe in war, mercy to the criminal in presence of the judicial power, mercy to the wretched agents of inhuman wrong,—holy mercy, exceptionless, dictating love to the foe, compassion to the guilty, and forgiveness to the oppressor?

CHAPTER VIII.



THE mercy which is occupied in relieving the poor, forms so essential a part of Catholic justice, and enters so largely into every branch of duty belonging to the manners of a Catholic state, that having already considered them in relation to poverty of spirit, meekness, mourning, and justice, it might be imagined there would be nothing left in the way of historical illustration to throw light upon the exercise of this virtue in the middle ages, since so much has been already exhibited in connexion with the four first qualifications for the attainment of divine beatitude. "I question not," as Dante says, "but he who searched our volumes leaf by leaf might still find a page with this inscription on it, 'I am, as I was wont.'" Nevertheless, somewhat still remains unseen; nor would it, indeed, have been possible to exhaust the subject of mercy to the poor, as it was taught and practised during the ages of faith. That it was the inseparable attendant upon the preceding graces will be obvious to any one who considers for a moment their character and object. The poor in spirit must necessarily have loved those who were in a situation the most favourable, perhaps, to the development and exercise of the same grace. The meek could not but love those

who were the peculiar and fitting objects towards whom they should exercise humility. Mourners would naturally seek to join the society of those who were alike unhappy. Those who had compassion on themselves, labouring in the groans of penitence, which, saith St. Bernard, is the first stage of mercy,* would not be remiss in tenderness to others; besides that all penitential exercises of necessity involved mercy to the poor; so that Alanus de Insulis and Vincent of Beauvais, or he who continued his great work, and in general all such writers, immediately after treating on confession and satisfaction, proceed to the subject of alms. Above all, they who thirsted after justice could not but feel the strict obligation of ministering to the wants of their distressed brethren; "for to give alms," as the same moralists remark, "is a part of justice; and although the transgressors of this precept are not punished by human laws, yet are they by the divine law."† They inform us, indeed, that in the language of David justice is nothing else but mercy, as in the line so often sung by the Church, beginning with, "Dispersit, dedit pauperibus;" which is the justice enduring for ever, that the prophet

* De Conversione, c. 16.

† Vin. Bellov. Specul. Mor. Lib. iii. p. x. dist. 19.

also saith shall go before the face of the merciful; at the sight of which beautiful precursor, angel-like, with golden wings, the gates of heaven, as St. Chrysostom saith, will open instantly, without there being any in the city of the blessed so daring, or amongst the seraphs so inflamed and burning, as to attempt to question their right of entrance.*

In the society, however, of the middle ages, men were not left to learn this duty by inferences only. Most striking is the sentence and admonition of the venerable Bede, when he shows that only by charity to the poor can those persons who remain in the world expect to join hereafter the society of the religious who had persevered in the way of perfection, in conformity with the counsels of Christ. "There are," saith he, "two orders of elect in the future judgment: the one of those judging with the Lord, who left all and followed him; the other of those judged by the Lord, who did not indeed similarly leave all things, but yet who of the things which they possessed gave daily alms to the poor of Christ, who will therefore hear at judgment, Venite benedicite."†

Here, again, we are presented, in the history of Catholic manners, with a feature divine and supernatural. "Endeavour to be charitable only by your reason," says an ascetic writer: "you will endeavour in vain." As the origin of that virtue is more elevated, so are its indications often distinct from all signs of mere natural benevolence. Charity is not to be estimated by its external acts; it is extinguished often amidst the greatest largesse, and it burns with all its ardour in the smallest alms. It is divine love which constitutes the value of alms, as of martyrdom.‡ To give them through vain glory is evil, notwithstanding the goodness of the external act."§

The moralists of the middle ages show in great detail the necessity of paying attention to the quality of alms, teaching that they must be given in purity of affection and intention, in charity and from charity, not through a desire of human praise or any temporal advantage; and that they must be offered with humility and devotion, as if recognising our Lord in the person of the poor.|| We shall be convinced, as we ad-

vance, that in consequence of this doctrine the social condition of the poor in the middle ages was very different from what later philosophers are apt to represent as being natural and just, and that the material order in regard to them was greatly modified by the spiritual. The triumph of the cross, in fact, seems to have been most complete here.

In the middle ages there was a celebrated legend respecting an infidel prince, who refused to believe the truth of the Christian religion, because, on being presented at the court of Charlemagne, he observed that the poor were placed at a low table, and provided with inferior food. This was indeed the exaggerated colouring of a romance; but what would the inventors of such tales have said, if they had been told that in the chapel of Charlemagne the poor were not suffered to approach the altar, to partake of the divine mysteries, until the rich had left it? What would they have made their infidel prince say on remarking that ordinance? I think, beyond all doubt, it would be something terribly severe. I should fear to write it down, because, perhaps, if such a measure were to be adopted at present in any country where the influence of the modern philosophy has been widely spread for many generations, it would surprise or offend no one. However, without being conscious of any exaggeration or arrogance, I think we might affirm that those old writers, in their simplicity, or, if you will, in their presumption, would never have thought of defending the emperor and his courtiers, who acquiesced in such a measure, by alleging reasons of convenience and expediency, but would have attempted to justify it in the eyes of the infidel by assuring him that they were men of very subtle and deep thoughts. Whether we should have heard that the answer had satisfied the malicious infidel, is another question. Even the authors of chivalrous tales were not the superficial scribes we think them. After all, the poor are men; the poor can feel themselves honoured and humiliated; and it would certainly, in ancient times have been thought to require a very acute intelligence to contrive, with a saving of faith, to give external precedence to the rich as rich, in the immediate presence of Jesus Christ. It is most true the different ranks in society were not then marshalled in opposition to each other, as if expecting every year to gratify a mutual and long-cherished hatred in a pitched battle. The rich and great were respected by the poor, whether it was sup-

* Ap. Cresollii Anth. Sacra.

† Bede in Natali S. Benedicti.

‡ Idiote Contemp.

§ S. Thom. Sum. 1, q. 20, a. 1.

|| Vinc. Bellov. Speculum Moral. Lib. iii. pars x. d. 22.

posed, as with the Easterns and the Sclavonic races, that the word which expressed them was justly derived from the Divinity as the giver of riches, or as with the occidental nations, the Germans, Italians, and French, from royalty as coming from the king. "We do not execrate all riches and rich men," says the writer mistaken for Vincent of Beauvais, "for they are not in fault, but only the abuse. Riches are lawful, if acquired without iniquity, preserved with humbleness, and the fear of God, expended with sobriety and frugality in necessary and lawful uses, and dispensed with piety to the poor."*

St. Bernard even says, "Though God is not an acceptor of persons, yet I know not how virtue in a noble person pleases more—perhaps as implying greater freedom of choice."†

The friend and lover of the people in the middle ages, like this living splendour of the Church, or the blessed Francis of Assisium, did not therefore seek to render noblemen unpopular, or excite the poor against the rich—did not encourage them to seize by violence what was not their own; he was not a tribune, not a Gracchus. To love the weak and unassuming is a sentiment to which the pride of our nature is not averse; but as he did, to love the rich, and mighty, and proud, is the triumph of Catholic charity. Yet it is no less certain, that through regard for the spiritual interests which are promoted by assisting and comforting the poor, the practical tendency of riches was contemplated with fear and some degree of horror. Not the least merit was ascribed to men for becoming rich; but, on the contrary, riches without alms in strict proportion were thought a crime. To omit other considerations, it was regarded as proved from experience that happiness alone is capable of hardening the heart of man, and of rendering the acquisition of charity almost impossible. Here, as Bossuet remarks, is the malediction of the great fortunes; here it is that the spirit of the world appears most opposed to the spirit of Christianity: for what is the spirit of Christianity? It is a spirit of fraternity, a spirit of tenderness, a compassion which makes us feel the sufferings of our brethren, enter into their interests, and experience their wants. On the contrary, the spirit of the world, that is to say, the spirit of grandeur, is an excess of self-love, which, very far from thinking of others, imagines that there is

nothing in the world but itself.* You find this fact discerned by men of observing habits, however widely separated from each other by opinions, nation, language, or age.

Bossuet, who preached to the court of Louis XIV., and Tieck, who enriches the German literature of the nineteenth century with characters drawn from nature, agree in this representation. "No, no," says the latter, speaking in the person of an aged recluse, "I have been young, and I have lived in the world, and I have not been always poor, as you see me now. No trusting the great, no connexion with the rich! They know not the love of God; compassion and mercy are strangers to them; egotism is their pillow, cruelty their bed. What should I do in the midst of such people? If I have long lived in this state, which you deem so poor and miserable, and found it happy, it was not to return to your equitable, wise, intelligent men, who always know how to find an honest and specious pretext for every shameful and criminal action. From the time that I first made acquaintance with beggars, I made acquaintance with hearts that my Saviour has touched. Leave me in peace to be poor, to be so poor as to be obliged to beg, that is my happiness and my devotion. My Saviour also had not where to lay his head. Almost all men think that they begin to live from the day that they acquire property. As for me, I lost and despised every thing, and it is from that time that I feel at my ease. Blessed Father Francis, and many others more, St. Roch, St. Alexis thought the same. It is already a paradise on earth to be poor, and to possess nothing. Ah, you worldly people! you know not what you renounce to be men of the world, and surpassing others in riches and dignity! To be humbled, prostrate in the dust, trampled on by pride, O that is the true happy state, the sweet solitude of the heart and of charity."

In this passage the authority of the seraphic father St. Francis is justly cited; for it is one of his injunctions in his first Rule to the Minors, that they should rejoice when they could converse with poor, miserable persons, infirm and abject, and such as beg by the way from door to door.†

Already, reader, you must begin to suspect that a wide distance separates Catholic charity, as taught and practised in the ages of faith, in all its views and principles and forms of development, from the beneficence of the moderns, wanting faith, which is found

* Speculum Moral. Lib. i. p. iv. 22.

† Epist. cxiii.

* Serm. sur la Charité Fraternelle. + Cap. 11.

alternating so easily with riches and the love of grandeur; when even they who go before, the shepherds of the flock, extol advancement as a proof of merit, and when the multitude therefore, who see their guides strike at the very good they covet most, feed there, and look no further: and in fact, no estimate that you have formed of that distance will be in danger of having overpassed the truth. Perhaps my words may seem exaggerated to those from whom a new law hath taken memory and custom of love-tuned deeds; but not the less will I affirm, that in no respect has the great moral revolution of the sixteenth century, styled by its followers "Reform," produced such a change in the ideas and conduct of mankind, as in that of their notion of poverty, and treatment of the poor. The work of sixteen centuries in their favour was broken up in an instant, though its fragments were only gradually consumed; and that immense multitude of the human race was in a great measure, and as far as ideas respecting it were concerned, made to fall back to the place which it had occupied in the old civilization, before the poor had the Gospel preached to them. I say, in a great measure, for an exact return to the condition of the Gentiles, before the light of Christianity had risen, would, of course, have been impossible, independent of all religious changes; but, so far as was necessary to constitute a total opposition to the spirit and manners of the Catholic civilization, the revolution, although gradual, was as complete as the most ardent political economist of the reformed school could desire. That it would be in vain to think of explaining the phenomenon which here presents itself, by alleging any change which has taken place independent of religious influence in the material condition of European nations, will be clear also to every reader who has an intimate acquaintance with the history of the middle ages.

In the third book we had occasion to notice the riches of the ancient Catholic states; and here I shall briefly remark, that the population of those countries was then considered as superabundant. Leander Albertus attempts to account for the extraordinary inundations to which the Po had subjected Italy in the sixteenth century, by adducing the vast increase of its inhabitants. "I think," he says, "that one cause consists in the prodigious multiplication of the human race in these latter times; for the plains can no longer furnish sufficient food

for the population, so that men are now obliged to cultivate the tops of mountains; and in consequence of their soil being thus disturbed, the waters descend more freely into this great river, and cause it to overflow its banks."* Setting aside therefore at once, as founded on error, the theories of modern writers respecting the causes of this moral revolution, let us proceed to view the facts which have been presented to the world at these different stages of its history. The ancient states produced slavery. Christianity produced poverty, in the common sense of the word; Protestantism produced pauperism, for it was necessary to invent a new word for the condition of existence, to which the reformed system reduced that class of men, who in the ages of faith had occupied so eminent a dignity in the bosom of the Church of Jesus Christ. Under the system of poverty and Catholicism, the friendship of the poor, as St. Bernard says, made men the friends of kings, who deemed it an act not beneath their dignity to wash the feet of beggars. Under that of pauperism and reform, you may illustrate the proposition in the book of wisdom, that all flesh seeks communion with its like, by alleging the instance produced there: "*quæ communicatio sancto homini ad canem? aut quæ pars diviti ad pauperem?*" The pauper indeed plays as prominent a part in the drama of public life, as the poor man did formerly, but it is not exactly the same part. The pauper too falls under the observation of princes and nobles; and there are regulations also made in regard to him; but whether he is the object of that disinterested and personal affection, on which we shall find that the poor man in Catholic times might always reckon when he heard of the rich and powerful espousing his interests, is a question which, before we are at the end of the present chapter, the reader will be quite competent to answer for himself. At the first step one thing is clear, for evidently all the notions of men at present respecting the very mode and form of exhibiting mercy to the poor, are utterly unlike those which universally prevailed in ages of faith. Compassion was then to be increased by the presence of the suffering object, from which every one now endeavours to escape, like Agar, unable or unwilling to endure the sight of what would awaken pity, and seeking relief in flight, exclaiming, I will not see the boy die.†

* Leand. Albert. Descript. Italiam, 598.

† Gen. xxi. 16.

But moralists of the Catholic school remarked, that our divine Lord, who was animated with an ardent desire of suffering, acted differently: he approached the tomb of his friend Lazarus, and wept; he looked on Jerusalem, his dearly loved city, and groaned over its calamities. Jacob, they go on to observe, did not turn away from the view of his son's garment stained with blood. These were the patterns for those who were of the Mount. Thibaud, Count of Champagne, used to give shoes and vests to the poor with his own hand; and being asked once why he did so, he replied, that he chose to dispense them thus in order that, by giving and labouring personally, he might be the more moved to devotion and pity for the poor, and be disposed to practise always greater humility.* "God hath given thee eyes," says Guy de Roye, explaining the five senses of nature, "in order that you might look on others with pity:† the last purpose for which modern philosophers would suppose they were intended; though in the divine oracles the symbol of mercy is the eye:‡ but these men have reversed every thing. Catholic charity is that which flies not from the view of misery and infirmity—which conquers the repugnance of sense by seeing only the immortal soul which suffers and is purified; the Catholic religion says, be generous, be merciful; relieve Christ in the person of the poor man, behold the sufferings of the wretched; and if the wretched do not come in your way, leave your way, and descend in search of them through penury's roofless huts and squalid cells. The beneficence of the modern systems requires no such sacrifice. To own all sympathies, and exterminate the insidious pride that waits on riches, to cultivate compassion in practice, not in fancy, to sit and smile with poor men, "to kiss salt tears from the worn cheek of woe,—to live, as if to love and live were one,"—this is not reformed religion, or law, the creed of those who look to thrones of earth for discipline. The modern beneficence has other ways; it sets out with the conviction of Chremylus, in the old play, that it would be doing the greatest good to men if poverty could be banished, for that is now the basis of all views of territorial improvement, so that the first step is always to weed out poor people from an estate; and it pursues its

course in the spirit of his friend Blepsidemus, who exclaims, on beholding Poverty,

Ἄναξ Ἀπολλων, καὶ θεοί, ποῖ τις φύγη;

so that two men can be put to flight by one woman; for to the eye of persons formed by the type of this age, indigence wears the aspect of that vengeful Fury, which poets of old represented in their tragedies, from which every beholder must recoil in dismay. All this indeed is expressed in measured language; but do I exaggerate in estimating what is at the bottom? The new philosophy says, "be humane, relieve your fellow-men, without distressing yourself; there is no necessity for your coming in contact with these poor things; it would injure society if the disgusting and distressing sight of abject misery were seen. There are always proper persons to superintend the wretched; keep out of their way; and if they should obtrude themselves on your way, let the magistrate be apprised, let him protect you, and let the inscription over the doors of churches warn all devout persons from bringing disgrace upon their faith, by giving alms to the wretched beings that encompass them. Catholic charity came by hearing, and descended by faith into the heart; it was the result of a conviction that the words of Christ in the Gospel respecting those who relieved and neglected the poor, would hereafter be fulfilled; it was essentially, therefore, an intellectual act. The bounty of men, who adopt the modern principles and manners, may be justly said to come in general by speculating or following the independent but capricious sentiment of a generous heart. Its effects, accordingly, are very different: with Catholics the giving of alms was an art, and, as St. Chrysostom adds, the most useful and precious of all arts. Whether it be so with the moderns, I will not pretend to determine; but in that event, it has certainly made progress in a direction totally new. Their beneficence has no resemblance to that charity sung by Fortunatus, and ascribed by him to Sidonius II. Archbishop of Mayence:

Sis cibus ut populi, placide jejunia servas;
Et satias alios, subtrahis unde tibi.*

as also to St. Nicetius, Archbishop of Treves, of whom he says:

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. x. 21.

† Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

‡ Cresolii Anthol. Sacra, 519.

* Gallia Christiana, i. 347.

Dum tibi restrictus maneat et largus egenis
Quod facis in minimis, te dare credo Deo.

It is rather that doubtful beneficence which is expected from flesh and blood excited, or the motives of secret vanity, which would be despised even by the Turks, who have a proverb never to trust men who are generous after they have dined, and which Aristotle and the writers on physiognomy in the middle ages would not have been more inclined to trust, who affirm, from what they think general experience, that merciful persons are pale of complexion, of phlegmatic temperament, easily moved to tears, and of abstemious manners. Michael Scot remarks, that their brain is of a frigid complexion, that they are easily alarmed, that their voice seems sometimes to fail as if they had a certain impediment, that their mouth is generally small, indicating that they are not formed for boisterous scenes, that they eat but little, that they are secret, modest, learned and pacific.*

Cocles of Bologna, whose work appears also in the collection entitled "*Infinita Naturæ Secreta*," adds, "*Misericors est sapiens et disciplinatus et timidus et verecundus*"—four qualities which seem the very opposite to those which fit men for making orations before large convivial assemblies, and for contributing to the excitement and imitative fever of popular meetings for banqueting and mirth.†

The charity which follows the new banners is all mixed up with pleasure and ostentation, either with dinners and rites that savour of barbarous buffoonery, or with the triumphs that suit pride's golden palaces, balls, fancy fairs, lists of subscribers, strange combinations out of common things, and inventions how to fleet the time in delicate accordance with the judgment of the world and a taste that guides a life of dissipation.

At Paris, in the fourteenth century, comedians were prohibited from giving plays during the time of collecting for the poor, lest the money of the people should be directed from them;‡ but the ingenious science of economy, in modern times, has enabled men to feel that they contribute to the support of the poor not only without subtracting any thing from their

own usual amusements, but even in proportion as they multiply them; so that the most dissipated are the most merciful. But this adjustment of the difficulty, however subtle, would not have been suffered to satisfy any understanding, much less to tranquillize any conscience, during ages of faith. "Dead flies corrupt the ointment; that is," adds St. Bernard, "vanity, curiosity, and pleasure: and as these abound in sacrifices of the Egyptians, we cannot in Egypt sacrifice to our Lord God a sacrifice of justice and charity. Therefore we must go a journey of three days into the desert; that is, into the solitude of the heart."* The two schools, therefore, are at issue: what the one denounces as a source of corruption, is recommended by the other as a vital energetic principle; and as it has pleased most governments of the north to decide in favour of the latter, the whole face of our countries bears testimony to the revolution of opinion which has taken place. Poverty and misery, nakedness and hunger, are as before, or rather, perhaps, such as they never were before; so that the senator now rises from the banquet, where discourse has turned on the state of pauperism, like him who, at his game of dice, hath lost, and when all the company go forth, remains in sadness fixed, revolving in his mind what luckless throws he cast. But meanwhile nothing horrible offends the sight; the poor and squalid tenants of cellars are not seen; the naked and the hungry are not permitted to come within view of the privileged classes, pampered with rank luxuriousness and ease, whose delicacy would be shocked at the spectacle, or in whose breasts remorse, perhaps, would occasion uneasiness if that spectacle were beheld. The legislature and police have taken care to establish a better order; they have protected these voluptuous men from the stings of their own conscience.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, in describing the happiness of the poor in his age, remarks, that they who are not infirm run fewer risks of incurring fatal evil than the rich. "They move about," he says, "from place to place; sometimes they take up a position here, sometimes there; and they manage so well, that they find at length some soul who is ready to comfort them.

They sit down in the open squares and market-places; they address the passers; they implore their assistance."

* S. Bernard. *Sententie*.

* Michael Scotus, *Liber Physionomie*, pars ii. cap. xxxiii. xlv. lxvii.

† Magistri Bartholomei Cocclitis, Bonon. *Physionomisti Anastasia*, Lib. i. p. 20.

‡ Monteil, *Hist. des Français*, tom. vi.

They should not do so if our reform had extended there. Very different was their condition after the modern notions of economy had superseded the manners of the Catholic state.

Times there were, indeed, when a saintly silversmith like Eligius might entertain the poor at his door every day, and no other notice be taken of his custom, but by the inhabitants of the city saying always to those strangers who asked to be shown the way to his house, "Go into such a street; and where you see gathered a crowd of lame, and halt, and blind, enter, for there is his dwelling." But had a friend of the poor acted in the same manner after the establishment of the modern religions, he would have been denounced to the magistrates as injuring his neighbours, by rendering disgusting the public way; and though he might be a prince of the empire, he must either have caused the poor to forsake his gates, or been content himself to leave the city. Men who are duly formed to move in the modern civilization hold poverty to be a cursed, not a blessed state, and those who would adopt it from choice, to be mad, not holy. Where they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian. "Pass on, and come not near—put money in thy purse, or get thee to a workhouse!" is the only reply to the afflicted, who tremblingly make known their wants, and ask for pity in the name of Christ the Saviour. To a workhouse! The progress is not great from times when the reply was,

*Οἰκοῦν ἡπολοῦν σοι τὸ βάραθρον γίγνεται.**

For what, if it be a stranger, that has no claim, as the world says, or even if he claim be unequivocal, but the dejected being should be as gentle as unfortunate, and should have a mind too delicate to outface the scrutinizing look of humourists, strong in the might of office?—what if it be a maiden or a child, not necessarily insensible, or void of all the tender feelings of humanity, because poor and friendless? Can we then point with exultation at our legal statutes, and at the coarse dreary piles which furnish what they grant? Truly, in such cases, the difference may not be so very great between the pit at Athens, into which were to be precipitated those whom the law punished, and this

new Barathron, into which are to be received those whom the law relieves, especially if we take into account the ordeal through which their discouraged hearts must pass—the bitter words and all the taunts which, from the prosperous, weak misfortune takes—before they can attain to the full enjoyment of the good things which strict law awards and aged sullen avarice pays. To a workhouse!—yes, holy Poverty, that is the word now, alike to thee, perhaps, accepting as a gift of God all humiliation; but I will add, hideous word! only to be equalled in deformity by the edifice on which it is inscribed, that doth the eyes and bosom fill with grief—barbarous title, which would as precisely designate a place not made for dwelling of the human kind, yet doubtless here pregnant with sad truth; for what are men, if only their bare wants are satisfied?

"O reason not the need! our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs—
Man's life is cheap as beast's."

"There are persons," says the universal doctor, "who give to the poor what they would scarcely throw before swine, and yet think that they can redeem their sins thereby; and this is, as it were, blasphemy against God."*

Such men are never wanting; but what a contrast to all this will be presented to an observer conversant with the manners of Catholic ages in days of yore, as recorded in history? O God! how will such a person be able to convince himself that he is now in the same world, the same country, the same city, as that on which his memory dwells? Certainly, if he should attempt to describe the manner in which the poor were generally treated by Catholics in the middle ages, no man will believe his report. He cannot describe it without using terms that will seem to every one as exaggerated and poetical. All that he can do will be to invite men to examine facts, proclaiming things kinder and wiser than were ever said in human book—"except in Shakspeare's wisest tenderness"—invite them to see the palaces in which the poor were received in sickness, the cloistered courts which were built to shelter them in age and infirmities, the banquets which were provided for them

* Aristoph. *Plutus*.

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. xxxiii.

in the halls of princes, the choice dainties which were reserved for them from the table of the nobleman—the sepulchres, on which tears of pity and abundant alms are commemorated amongst the highest graces of a king; as that of Louis VII. of France, on which we read,

*"Lingua preces vivas, lacrymas pia palpebra fudit,
Pauperibus solidos officiosa manus."**

All that he can do will be to point out the laws, which, so far from subjecting the poor to imprisonment, on pretence of their presence in public injuring or offending the community, pronounce it an indictable offence to make any appropriation of the tracts of ground which in almost every parish had been set apart for their use or enjoyment, as may be witnessed in the petition against the Duke of Suffolk, for enclosing the commons of Melford.* The administrators, too, of these laws he may produce in evidence, some of whom, if possible, would have weighed the tears of the poor as more precious than all the jewels of a crown, if they had to make them restitution for an injury. With such recollections, is it wonderful that he should feel alarmed at the prodigious diminution of mercy which has taken place in the intercourse between rich and poor? or that he should be inclined to repeat to the men around him, and to himself too, that piercing reproof of a famous author, who may live to win back all his merits: "You say that you love your brethren—what would you do if you hated them?" Alas, where truths are diminished, how could mercy remain whole? In these limits where the feet of Christ's messengers once found no obstacle, such a growth has sprung of rank and venomous roots as long would mock slow culture's toil. Where is good Dunstan? where Elphegus, Anselm, Lanfranc, Ælred? Wonder not, lordling, if the poor do weep, when I recall to them those once-loved names,—Edmond of Abingdon, and Bede of Wearmouth, the hooded men of Glastonbury and Tintern, with Netley's cloister, and Croyland, each race disherited, and besides these, the ladies and the knights that visited the fatherless and the widow, and cheered to enchantment their afflicted hearts with love and courtesy. Look how the human breast to felness hath relapsed, from having lost correction! Talk of difficulties in the

way of admitting the truth of Catholic doctrines! Hypocrites! Let them say rather the impossibility of treating Lazarus as their brother. Come, see the gates of these reformed Christians, forgetful of their old nobility, and the menial troop which hastens to drive away, with refined insult, the poor beggar whose sores the dogs, perhaps, were about to lick! There is a progress here. Dives could see a mendicant. Come, see the enviers of this new nobility, the masters of manufactories! See the active agents for preserving this social order perfected—the magistrates and overseers, the beadles and the bars of justice—and those sunk in grief before them! Come, cruel one! come and behold the children, slaves who must work sixteen hours in the day!—the orphan arraigned as a criminal for having prayed over her father's grave! Come and see the portals that refuse to open when cries of a woman in her last distress collect a crowd before them of such comforters as say, "How poor thou art!" and look upon the spot of mire where she does lay her burden down, with no heroic Bruce to shelter her! Come and mark these injuries, no longer strange, and thou mayest see what charity thy reformed creed hath nurtured! Come and behold what love is found among thy people; and if thy proud inventions needs must reign for ever, come, at least, and witness their effects! But, lordling, go thy ways; for now I take more joy in weeping than in words!

"Oh!" cries Tieck, on seeing the disdain with which the poor are treated, "I can fully enter into your feelings, ye holy saints, whom the world scorns and scoffs at—ye who did scatter your all, even down to your very raiment, among the poor, and did gird your loins with sackcloth, and did resolve as beggars to undergo the gibes and the kicks wherewith brutal insolence and swilling voluptuousness drive the needy from their doors; that by so doing you might thoroughly purge yourselves from the foul sin of wealth."

It is not to be inferred, however, that the action of Catholic charity was incompatible with the regulations of a wise and humane police. It was a law of Charlemagne, that every seigneur should be bound to nourish the infirm poor on his lands, that they might not be obliged to wander elsewhere; though, indeed, express provision was made for the charitable reception of the poor strangers who might fly in troops from their country through dread

* Ap. Duchesne, IV. † Hen. VI. 2d P. I.

of the Normans or Britons;* and in Rome, Venice, and other cities of Italy, we find at the present day spacious and solemn buildings on which is inscribed, "Pious House of Exercise for the Poor," or a text from the apostolic epistles teaching that men should live by the labour of their hands. In what is called the great school of charity, at Venice, you read, "Quid prodest homini si charitate hominem non alit? Charitas enim a Deo descendit." And again, "Venice preserves her dominion by religion, law, and justice—her subjects by charity and love."

Howard visited many of these Catholic institutions; and his description is not a little curious, if contrasted with what is found in countries that have adopted the reform of the sixteenth century. The great hospital for the employment of the poor, in the suburbs of Vienna, contained, when he visited it, three thousand persons. He says that the order, the cleanliness, the elegance observed there, cannot be seen without lively satisfaction. Indigence and old age, he adds, wear a smiling aspect here. Many of the inmates have attained the age of eighty. All the profit of their work is at their own disposal. You see cheerful faces on every side.

At Rome the hospital of St. Michael, for the same object, is vast and noble. Each person is instructed in some trade; and when a young man has attained the age of twenty, he is presented with a suit of new clothes and a sum of money to enable him to commence keeping a shop for himself. In the centre court is a beautiful fountain, and the chambers around it are appropriated to the aged and infirm. "In 1781, I beheld," he says, "260 men and 226 women, enjoying here a consoling retreat. A vast table is provided for them, and they all seemed to feel and enjoy thoroughly the value of the succour which charity has provided for them." According to his description, the great house of correction at Ghent was conducted with such order, decorum, and religion, that one might take it for a college. In Spain there is such abundance of charitable institutions, that he says one finds few or no beggars. In the house of correction of San Fernando, which is at a distance of three leagues from Madrid, he found the utmost order, provision of excellent food, a humane and attentive governor to watch over the men, a matron to superintend the women, and

a general discipline maintained throughout, which could only arise from the strict care which was taken to oblige every one to observe their religious duties.*

The confraternities of the middle age had enacted various wise regulations respecting the interests of the poor; but the persons employed in such offices were not hardened hirelings, such as would be deemed unfit, as Rubichon remarks, for the care of horses or dogs. They were the meek and holy, who voluntarily undertook the burden of such tasks for the love of God, and for which they could never have conceived that any one would think of proposing to them a temporal compensation. When the apostles were about to choose persons for the office of ministering to the temporal wants of the poor, they selected them as "*viros plenos Spiritu Sancto et sapientia*."† Such were the overseers of the middle age, if that term can be applied to persons who discharged an office so different from what the word is now commonly used to imply. Discretion was allowed to the rich, when there was a display of suffering generally exaggerated, and a wise police enforced by magistrates subjected them to no censure.‡ In fact, St. Bernardine of Sienna distinguishes a triple poverty, voluntary, necessary, and pretended, that of the poor of Christ, of the poor of this world, and of the poor of Satan, rich in avarice, poor in substance; to whom, as Hugo of St. Victor says, Christ doth not promise the kingdom, but hell.§ And although the Church placed no bounds to her charity, yet the fathers of the fourth council of Carthage required that the Catholic poor should be more respected than others: "*pauperes et senes ecclesie plus ceteris honorandi sunt*."||

Thus, when money was given to St. Vincent of Paul, to enable him to purchase a horse, being resolved to bestow it in charity, the objects he selected in preference were the poor English and Irish Catholics, who had fled from the tyranny of Cromwell. "Alms ought to be discreet," say the ancient moralists; "we should give to the good rather than to the evil; to many, not to one alone."¶ St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, passing one day in the street of St. Ambrose, entered a house, where he found three poor maidens leading

* Capit. Car. Calv. Duchesne, tom. ii.

* Howard on the State of Prisons, &c.

† Acts vi. 3.

‡ Ligorio Theolog. Mor. Lib. ii. 3.

§ De Claustro Animæ, i. 9.

|| Can. 33.

¶ Vin. Bellov. Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. x. 22.

a pious, retired, and industrious life, nourishing their mother and themselves with the work of their hands. Being moved to compassion, he assigned them a pension ; but after some time, hearing that they began to neglect their work, and grow dissipated, he returned, and remonstrated with them, and withdrew part of the pension, in order that they might be obliged to resume their honest employment.

A poor citizen of Florence going one morning very early to the church of the Annunziata, overheard two blind men discoursing to each other on their respective funds, one of whom said, that he had two hundred gold ducats sewed within his cap ; while the other replied, that he had three hundred similarly concealed in his cloak. The citizen repaired to the Archbishop, and told him what he had heard, who called the blind men before him, and reproached them with the injury which they inflicted on other poor men, and said, that henceforth he would support them as long as they lived, but that they must give up the five hundred ducats, which he handed over to the poor citizen, to form a dower for one of his daughters.*

Of similar discretion in the dispensation of immense alms, an example is found in the conduct of Diego Deza, Archbishop of Toledo, in the time of Charles V. In the first place, pitying the condition of reduced noble families, he set apart one quarter of his own palace, in order to receive their children, that they might obtain there a Christian education at his expense, and under his own eye. Then, in distributing his riches to the poor, he contrived that each distressed family should be relieved ; but as he did not favour idleness, he used to give corn to labourers, and tools to artisans, encouraging them in this manner to provide for their own maintenance.†

The amount of the alms of Yves Mayeuc, Bishop of Rennes, and Confessor of Queen Anne of Brittany, from whose charity he drew liberal resources, was not more remarkable than the discretion with which it was dispensed. It is true, in regard to his own wants, nothing could be less prudent than his bounty ; inasmuch, that his domestics were obliged frequently to remonstrate with him, and therefore, he used to give much in secret, and to seize the opportunity, when his servants were not

present, to give to some poor person whatever he could lay his hands on ; but, in general, it was his custom to get the poor instructed in some trade. He kept in his episcopal house, and paid out of his own purse, a number of shoemakers, tailors, and cap-makers, who were constantly employed to work for the poor : he purchased the leather and cloth, and when the articles were finished, he used to carry them, in his own hands, to such families as he knew wanted them.*

Muratori evinced as much displeasure at idleness and deceitful mendicity, as he showed love for the virtuous poor. He obtained an order from the Duke of Modena, prohibiting any one to beg in the streets, unless furnished with a ticket, which was only granted by a confraternity of charity, after an investigation into the condition of the person who desired permission. In France, in 1493, strict ordinances were published against beggars and vagrants ;‡ but this was at a time when the civil government was fast losing the impression which it had received from the faith, and when, perhaps, it must be confessed, the principles of the Gallican schools partook in some degree of that severity ; inasmuch that the Sorbonne, when consulted in 1530, by the magistrates of Lille, decided that the poor might be forced to receive no alms but from the public fund, and the citizens restrained from giving alms, excepting to the public fund ;‡ but the decision of such an assembly could not prevent men in those days from blushing at its practical inferences, for the force of nature is very great ; so that the public mind was still sufficient to counteract the severity of any local measures of administration ; for the rule of manners respecting the poor continued to be taught and practised in conformity with the spirit of the early ages of the Church, when a St. Hermas said, "Let your charity have a free course ; give, give to all who are in need, without examining to whom you give ; for God wills that you give to all ; it is He who will demand an account from those who receive as to the use which they will have made of your gifts :"\$ and when St. Chrysostom had been heard to say, a merciful man is like a port for the wretched,

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. Liv. iii.

† Id. tom. iii. Liv. 24.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. liv. 25.

† Ord. 1493, art. 55, coutume du Béarn, art. 44, coutume de Loudun, chap. 39.

‡ Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. vi. 68.

\$ St. Hermas, Pastor Parabol. ii. Mand. ii.

which receives both bad and good. If you see one that has suffered the shipwreck of poverty, judge not his deeds, but show him pity; it is an extreme insolence to inquire with curiosity into the life of a miserable person, because, forsooth, you have given him a loaf of bread. Even if he be a robber or a manslayer, still ought you not to give him that much or a little money? Doth not your Lord make his sun to shine upon him? I beseech you, therefore, "let us do all things in simplicity." The spectacle of poverty was still deemed necessary to the rich; and, in fact, the giving of alms was thought to confer greater benefit on the donor, than on the person himself who received them. Had men contracted any guilt? They gave alms, and the tears and joy which accompanied the fulfilment of that duty, together with the prayers of the poor object, wrought a change in their hearts, and disposed them to receive the sacrament of penance and reconciliation. By sense of new light, the men who persevered in deeds of mercy perceived from day to day their virtue growing, and the circuit of their charity widening as they ascended.

The historian of the Dominicans produces an interesting example: Peter de Tapia, a Dominican, celebrated Professor in the Universities of Spain, and subsequently Archbishop of Seville, was sent as a missionary to preach through various provinces of that kingdom. On one of these courses he happened, when travelling in Old Castile, on the frontiers of Arragon, to meet the Duke of Medina Celi, accompanied by some gentlemen, and followed by many servants. This Seigneur saluted the strange friar courteously, without knowing him, and asked him where he was going. "I have come," said the man of God, "from distributing the bread of life to your vassals." "Then," replied the duke, "you shall dispense the spiritual, while I furnish the corporal alms, in paying all your expenses while you are on my lands:" so after these few words they parted, and each pursued his way; but one of the gentlemen, who had recognised the father Tapia, failed not to tell the duke that he was a man of celebrated learning and sanctity; upon hearing which the duke sent back to request that he would not leave the territory without coming to see him. This charity was the origin of the duke's conversion: the young duke, governing many subjects, was himself governed by his passions. Separated from his wife, he lived with favourites in dissi-

pation and luxury, yet he possessed frankness, candour, and some generosity. A bad Christian, he, nevertheless, was generally considered by his vassals as a good master and good lord. As soon as the holy friar came to his castle, he opened his heart to him without disguise, and begged him to say how he ought to put in order his house, and the affairs of his state. The delight of the holy man may be easily conceived. The first change he effected was the reconciliation of the duke with the duchess: all persons who gave scandal were sent away: the duke laboured thenceforth to edify the people, and make them happy, consoling them in misfortunes, and defending them from all oppression. The benediction of heaven seemed to be manifested in the numerous offspring which were left, to transmit the titles of that great house; and the duke always ascribed his temporal prosperity to the charity which he had shown to the poor. The state of Alcala passed into his house on the death of the duchess of Montalto, without children; in allusion to which he said one day to the father Tapia, "Behold how God rewards, even in this life, the little service that one renders to Him in the persons of the poor." All that grieved the duke was, the resolution of the friar to accept not the smallest present from him; but as he was resolved to evince his gratitude in some way, he assigned to the college of Alcala a certain quantity of corn every year, and gave the superior a sum of money, which was employed in decorating the church, and in publishing the works of Cardinal Cajetan.*

"I will say, my Lorenzo, what I think; I cite the words of Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Lorenzo de' Medici: 'though it should seem an execrable saying, but it is true, and nothing is more sacred than truth. I will say freely then what I think. God, my Lorenzo, is venal; but with what money can the great God be bought? Ah, with that with which he bought others, that is, charity—with charity to the poor—for before Him we are all poor indeed, and he hath bought, He hath redeemed us. Let no one wise, or brave, or temperate, boast that he imitates God. These are but shadows of divine virtues. Only the man bountiful to the poor exactly imitates Him. O happy merchant, who with a small price, buys both men and God!'"†

* Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. v. liv. xxxvi. + Mars. Ficinus, *Epist. Lib. i.*

It is not to be inferred that generosity to the poor was of itself deemed capable of atoning for previous acts of corruption. The importance ascribed to alms was carefully defined and distinguished. Liberal offerings were not deemed fruits by which the character of the donors could be known. The question was not, how much is given ? but with what disposition is it given ? Cornelius Agrippa, in his dark, forbidden books, treats on almsgiving as part of the purgation necessary for the attainment of an oracular mind.* Magicians gave alms ; hypocrites and great criminals gave them ; therefore the guides of the middle ages were wiser than those who now rest satisfied with a statement of the amount which men lay at their feet. "Let not sinners flatter themselves remaining in crime, with the idea of redeeming their sins by alms ; for," continues the universal doctor, "alms are of no avail to obtaining pardon, unless by the intervention of penitence ; although I doubt not that alms, and other good works, may avail towards their obtaining a conversion of heart from God.† To the living, a general consequence of alms was known to be an increase of grace. "Alms," says Vincent of Beauvais, "multiply spiritual goods, and enrich the soul ; they multiply spiritual friends, and gain advocates in heaven." This doctrine was nothing less than part of the deposit of faith. Alms are termed by the fathers another baptism, according to the voice of Christ, *Date elemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis*. St. Jerome hesitates not to say, that the result of alms, springing from charity, is the same as that of baptism. "Such alms cleanse the soul as by an immersion. The fire of hell is extinguished by the sacred font, and the worm of conscience is destroyed by the pious liberality which relieveth Christ in the poor." Alms are compared, therefore, to the dove which Noah sent from the ark, and which returned to him in the evening with a green branch of olive ; for in the evening of our days, as death draws on, and the deluge of sorrows surrounds us, this dove will return to us, bringing confidence, peace, joy, and immortal glory. Hence St. Chrysostom says, "that alms have wings, and that they confer the lightness and elasticity of angels."‡ As for the application of ill-acquired goods to purposes of charity, the

Catholic religion can never be convicted of having sanctioned such an error. The ancient moralists show, that alms must be given in purity of possession, from one's own, not from another's substance,—that money acquired by unlawful means, and given to the poor, is not to be reputed alms, and that if one should give all that he has thus gained, he rather increases than diminishes sin.* Dionysius the Carthusian shows, that it is a miserable delusion to think of justifying plurality of benefices, by urging works of mercy ; for that such alms, so far from being conducive, are injurious to the divine honour.† It was evidently the universally prevailing belief in the middle ages, that almsgiving would avail nothing when it was the fruit of oppression, simony, or of any conduct reprehensible. Legends told of men appearing after their death, complaining of the torments they suffered, and declaring that even their charity to the poor was vain, adding, "since our alms had been given from goods unjustly gained."‡

Descending from Mount Gargano, where in the temple of the archangel he had spent some days, in a seraphic ardour of spirit, Matthew a Bassio, first general of the Capuchins, was received into the house of a certain usurer in Manfredonia, who placed food before him ; but when the friar beheld it, he exclaimed, "What do you offer me, mine host ? Is this bread or is it blood ?" "Bread certainly," replied he. To whom the man of God answered, "Not so, but instead of bread you are offering me the blood of the poor ! Ah, cruel bread, steeped in the gore of the poor of Christ ; who would not shudder at beholding it ?" Then rising from the table, he rushed into the street, and proceeded to the gate of the hospital, where he besought a lodging. The host, terrified at the scene, like another Zaccheus, vowed instantly to make restitution, and from that day forth to renounce the manners of his past life.§ But the source of bounty to the poor was not diminished by keeping it clear from all connexion with polluted streams. In these ages the Castellan, the knight, or even the peasant, might have used the words of Job, and said, "Si desepi pereuntem ; eo quod non habuerit indumentum et absque operimento pauperem."|| We find their zeal in this respect

* De Occult. Philosoph. Lib. iii. c. 56.

† Alani de Insulis Liber Pœnitentialis.

‡ Hom. vii. de Pœnit.

* Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. p. x. 19.

† Dion. Carth. De Fonte Lucis, l.

‡ Amalricus Angerinus.

§ Annales Capucinatorum, an. 1552. || xxxi. 19.

attested on their tombs, as on that of Evrin, Seigneur of Lagny, in the church of the abbey of Lagny, who, towards the close of a holy life, became a priest; for the inscription is to this effect:

Qui pertransitis, si rem pensare velitis
Hic faciendo moras, non incusabitis horas:
Prudens, pacificus, qui presbyter unde pudicus,
Qui nudo vestis, qui consolatio mœstis,
Qui risus fletu fuit, et cibus esurienti,
Hic situs Evrinus; meruit mundo peregrinus
Nunc inter cives cœlorum vivere dives.*

Thus Spenser describes one whose mode of assisting the poor, proves that the poet was familiar with the old Catholic traditions of manners:

He had a wardrobe not of garments gay,
But clothes meet to keep keene cold away,
And naked nature seemely to aray:
With which bare wretched wights be dayly clad,
The images of God in earthly clay;
And if that no spare clothes to give he had,
His owne cote he would cut, and it distribute glad.†

Notwithstanding the number and magnificence of the religious edifices, which date from the middle ages, there appears to have been then but little occasion for repeating the warning of St. Chrysostom against the secret vanity, which prefers constructing material temples, to relieving the unknown poor in secret.‡ Truly, the Christians of those dark ages, as they are termed, will be able to remember, at the terrific judgment of Christ, having seen their Lord hungry, and having fed him, thirsty, and given him to drink, a stranger, and taken him in, naked, and clothed him, sick and in prison, and visited him. Nothing was omitted that could tend to remind men of their obligations to the poor. In many states, as we still can observe in Italy, even the inscription upon the money comprised an admonition to give alms, and a sentence from the Holy Scriptures to that effect. The emblem of poverty asking alms, and exalted to heaven by Jesus Christ, was sculptured on the walls of cathedrals and abbey churches, under the form of a woman wearing a crown, and standing upon one foot, having the other, which resembled that of an aquatic bird, bent backwards as if in supplication, to suggest the word which, in the Italian language, signifies a beggar;

for the subtle investigators of the Scriptures in these ages had remarked, that such imagery was in harmony with what had been of old ordained, when Solomon in the temple made two doors of the wood of olive, to signify the material and spiritual works of mercy, and also with the conduct of Christ, who chose to ascend from the mount of Olives, in sign, as they suggest, that alms glorify and introduce into the eternal kingdom.*

The doctrine of modern political economists has yielded such a harvest, that men are found who avowedly disdain, through scorn of mendicancy, to ask their daily bread of God as in the prayer of our Lord, saying, we must, by work and industry, create it for ourselves: but, however humiliating the avowal may be deemed by sophists, it must be admitted that the clergy of the middle ages sanctioned the idea that there was nothing in the act of supplicating his fellow Christians contrary to the dignity of a disciple of the cross. In Flanders boys used to be seen in the streets wearing an ecclesiastical dress, and crying out, "Date bonis pueris panem pro Deo."

At the castle, or monastic gate, on the bridges, beneath the stone crosses on the highways, at the portals of churches, and wherever there was a spot that seemed to have an influence of religion, there sat the mendicant, the wandering palmer, or the destitute wretch who might hope by looks to excite compassion; and in relation to art, at least, it is no great progress to perfection to have our streets and portals stripped of such figures as Callot represents, and insolent well-dressed proletaires demanding assistance, for the sake of propriety and the honour of a gentleman, in their place. The old painters are fond of these subjects; witness the picture in which we see a wall, through which is a small window with a cross over it, and the word "alms" inscribed, before which a crowd of poor persons, old and young, are presenting themselves, while a hand alone is seen dispensing alms. These windows can be remarked in most of our ancient buildings, though they have been walled up since many years. Neither can I discover grounds for believing, that in the moral order the change has been so greatly for the better, as some writers affirm. In Catholic countries, where the ancient manners and institutions remain, the poor are not that clamorous, obtrusive, and almost

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xv. 35.

† Spenser, i. 10.

‡ In Hom. 45. Matt. c. 23.

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. iii. 10.

menacing race, which they are forced to become elsewhere. Dante represents them standing meekly in silence, and content to let their looks speak for them. All is peaceable, orderly, even cheerful in the group before the gate. Each waits for his turn, and seems as grateful to behold another receive alms, as if it had been given to himself; as if each followed the precept of the seraphic father, who says, "I return thanks to God that I was never a robber of alms, for I have always taken less than I might have had, lest other poor should be defrauded."* Their looks and words seem to verify the saying of the same blessed man, that whether alms are granted, or cruelly refused, they return equal thanks to God; if granted, for the consolation; and if refused, for the occasion offered of merit and patience.†

We have already remarked that the charity of the great in ages of faith involved them in a personal and often laborious service. Meekness went along with alms; and it was not deemed sufficient to be liberal, if one did not follow the example of our Lord in condescending to the poor. St. Gregory remarks, that the ruler asked him to come to his son, and he refused to go in person; but to the servant of the centurion, though not invited, he promised to go in person. The Son of God did not wish to go to the ruler's son, but yet he was ready to visit and save the poor servant;—"memorable lesson," adds the holy pope, "to reprove our pride, which refuses to estimate men as men."

In the middle ages, great consolation resulted to the poor from the general opinion, or rather Christian instinct, that simplicity was an estimable quality in the great. Thus Helgald says of Robert king of the Franks, "He loved simplicity, and he showed nothing but what was common, in his speech, walk, and manner of life."‡ The same virtue was ascribed to Charlemagne, and the epitaph on Isabella, daughter of St. Louis, particularly enulogizes her simplicity.§ In fact, it was then religion.

In Catholic times, it used to be the darling recreation of a young princess, daughter of a king, child in heart as well as in age, to feign herself one of the poor, laying aside her royal state, and putting on a peasant's cloak, to walk amidst her young maidens of honour, pretending to beg, and like St.

Elizabeth, perhaps, as if warned by a divine inspiration of the lot which Providence was reserving for her, saying, "It is thus that I shall walk about when I am poor and in misery, for the love of my God."*

The genius of great artists conduced to the same end. Of many it is particularly recorded, that, like Pietro Cavallini, the Roman painter, they were the most devoted friends of the poor.† He, it was true, was a man of saintly life; but where could they find studies for the holy family, if they did not frequent the society of the holy poor? Independent, therefore, originally, of religious motives, it evidently entered into the habits of our ancestors, and even into their notions of enjoyment, to visit personally the poor. Only look at their solitary cabins, and at the picturesque site on which they construct them, and judge how interesting it must have been to persons who had minds like those of the old Catholic gentry, to know somewhat of the inmates. Here they knew they should find a form of domestic life very different from the monotonous and artificial society of the rich. The lady of the feudal castle, as well as the artist of Rome and Florence, had felt this in the days of her youth, and piety sanctified what a love for nature had perhaps at first inspired. That lady, when she retired by night into her secret tower, and heard the rising gust drive the large drops against the tinkling pane, would look in contemplative mood from her casement towards the cottage on the distant heath, that she had visited perhaps only some few hours before, and then she would indulge her fancy in conjecturing what were at that moment the thoughts and occupations of the poor, alas! so much more exposed than she feels herself to the driving of the pitiless storm; for she knows the peasants intimately for many miles about, and it discolours not the complexion of her greatness to acknowledge it. Amidst all the splendour of her rank, she cherishes a familiar acquaintance with the sons and daughters of the poor; and, indeed, these humble considerations make her often out of love with her greatness. She feels it no disgrace to remember their names, or to know their faces, or to take note of the devout prints upon the walls, of their furniture, their tables, and dressers, with all that is arranged upon them in such neat order: or to hear the inventory of their shirts or gowns, to know at what time she must send linen to

* Apophthegmat. B. P. Francisci, xli.

† Sermo III.

‡ Id. tom. v. 443.

§ Ap. Duchesne, iv.

* Ct. de Montalembert, Hist. de S. Elis. c. 8.

† Vasari.

one or warm clothing to another. She knows what sport amuses most the child, as if she were its playfellow, and what sayings are familiar to the aged tongue, as if she culled wisdom from it. She has often sat as a dear friend in the poor man's cabin amidst the innocent group, round the blazing faggots gathered from her own woods; and not unknown to her are the simple profound sayings, the low muttered prayers, the strange old recollections, and the bright whispered hopes of the aged indigent creature who dwells like a recluse on the skirts of some wild wood or blasted moor.

The duchess, say the records of St. Elizabeth, used to ask the poor who applied to her, where they dwelt, and then no distance or difficulty of road could stop her. She visited the cottages farthest from the castle; she entered them with a kind of devotion mixed with familiarity, and consoled their inhabitants far less by her generous gifts than by her 'sweet and affectionate words. Often has she been seen leaving the castle loaded with provisions, taking precipitous paths to hasten to the huts in the neighbouring valleys. On one of these occasions, it is said, she met her husband in the woods returning from hunting, and that he saw a luminous crucifix over her head; which so moved him that he caused a pillar, surmounted with a cross, to be erected on the spot, as a memorial of it for ever.*

But to return to the mendicants and the wandering stranger. The seraphic father, St. Francis, said that the bread of beggars was blessed and sanctified by charity; it is holy bread, saith he, which the praise and love of God sanctifies.† "Cast your bread upon the passing waters; that is," adds St. Antony of Padua, "the poor who pass from place to place begging; and after much time you will find it—that is, you will be recompensed. Alms in holy Scripture are termed a sack, because whatever you put in it is found in the eternal life. Thou art a stranger, O man! Carry this sack on the way of thy pilgrimage, that in the evening, when thou arrivest at the hospice, thou mayest have some provision."‡

I said that in the circle of the beggars all was fair and orderly; and sooth, whether you be an artist in search of forms, or a philosopher in pursuit of moral observation, you will do well to pause awhile and remark the group that gather before the door of the

blessed merciful; you will see countenances among them that will impress you forcibly with the idea that they are those of living saints, of men of prayer and contemplation; and when they do speak, it is often to utter some affecting and piercing remark, or some benediction that sounds, even without attaching a supernatural importance to it, like a prognostic of future felicity. An ancient author speaks of the impressions caused in the mind of a certain matron, from the reply of two strangers whom she found before the church of the martyrs, John and Paul, at Rome, and to whom she ordered her almoner to give money. They had only said, "Thou hast visited us, and thou shalt be recompensed in the day of judgment." Yet these few words were sufficient to inflame her whole soul with the anticipations of heaven.* Truly no one need be surprised at such relations, who has sat down in the circle of beggars in Catholic countries, amongst whom it might so easily happen that there would be a blessed friend of God. Uncharitable tongues encourage rich men to suspect these just ones who return to them more than Romeo did to Raymond Berenger. Aged and weak, the wanderer departs; and if the prudent did know the heart he has, begging his life by morsels, they would lament their stern severity.

Antonio Manzone, surnamed Peregrinus, of his own accord left his country when a boy, through love of the celestial life, and travelled over nearly the whole world as a mendicant, living on alms. He visited Jerusalem, Rome, Loretto, Compostello, and other holy places, with incredible labours of body, and returned to Padua, his native city, absolutely unknown, where he led a life of poverty and want, till, with weakness, cold, and fatigue, he died, and left a writing behind him by which it was discovered that he was of the noble family of Mauzia of Padua.†

The scrupulous attention which every one evinced to give some gratification to the persons who applied to him for alms, might lead one to suppose that the Catholic rule was like that of the old heroic world, of which Homer makes Ulysses remind Nausicaa, when he entreats her to have pity on him, and adds,

— σε γὰρ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας
'Ες πρῶτην ἱκομένη.‡

* Ct. de Montalembert, Hist. de S. Eliz. chap. 8.
† Colloq. B. P. Francisci, vi.

‡ Ser. S. Antonii de Padua, Dom. ii. post Epiph.

* Vin. Bellov. Specul. Moral. iii. x. 21.

† Bernardini Scardeonii Hist. Patavinae, Lib. ii. Thesaur. Ant. Ital. tom. vi. ‡ Od. vi. 175.

To which, also, Sophocles makes Œdipus appeal, who, finding that he has first come to the grove sacred to the Eumenides, urges this circumstance as a claim to their especial favour, saying, "since to you, first of all the land, I have bent my knee," or applied for succour.*

"Whenever you give any thing," say the writers of the middle age, "mortify not with harsh words. A sweet word excels whatever you can give; it is above all your other presents." "There are men," says Guy de Roye, "who are so rude to the poor when asked to give alms, that they even reproach them, and apply vile epithets to them before they give them relief, which is a great confusion." Such alms please not God; for one ought to give immediately, remembering what Seneca saith, that nothing is bought so dear as what is gained by prayers.† The king, St. Louis, and that "dear holy Elizabeth," who in a short life, offered all that could adorn a Christian in a princess and a saint, had such a respect for the poor, that they never gave alms without kissing the hand that received them.

According to St. Gregory, compassion is more than a gift; because it is more to give oneself than one's property, for by compassion we give a part of ourselves—grief of heart. It was, therefore, the true Catholic mercy which Henry IV. ascribed to his son, saying,

"He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity."

This was imitating Him who wept at the sight of Martha and Mary, in order, as St. Gregory Nazianzen says, that tears might thenceforth be laudable.‡ St. Chrysostom therefore says, that to weep, *στυγνάζειν*, is a noble kind of alms;§ and notwithstanding the supernatural motive, humanity and pity were never to be wanting. Alms must be pious, say the ancient moralists, and given with compassion. We must be able to say with Job, "Flebam super eo qui afflictus fuerat, et anima mea compatiabatur pauperi."|| We read, in consequence, that John the Almoner always gave more to women than to men, on account of the infirmity of their sex. Those who give alms to beggars in the ancient paintings are always shown with kindly visage comforting them. "Nor do I mean," says St. Bernard,

"that we should be without affection, and that with a dry heart we should move our hands alone to the work. I have read, amongst the great evils of men enumerated by the apostle, that one consists in being without affection."*

"It is a glorious thing to be able to make true friendship," says the universal doctor, "and the charity of Christians has stronger bonds than natural love. You have a friend, not who should visit you in sickness, console you in prison, but whom you should visit in prison, whom you should feed when hungry, whom you should receive when erring. If you love your poor neighbour, by that mere love you give alms; for the alms of the heart are much greater than those of the body; for charity suffices in alms without earthly substance; and that which is corporally given does not suffice, unless it be offered with a benignant mind."†

It is this tender compassion which characterized those men of eminent charity, Francis and Dominick; for the spiritual and corporal necessities of their neighbours did so afflict them, that they used to dissolve into tears when they could not redress them. "Send no one away sad," says St. Thomas à Kempis, "but dismiss them in peace and joy. Let them have what food and drink may be needful to them, and afterwards commend yourself to their prayers; and if you should add any thing more for their consolation, God will repay you."‡ The maxim respecting alms was that of St. Augustin: "Semper redditur et semper debetur."§ For, as St. Antony of Padua observes, with the ancient writers whom we before heard, to give alms is an act of justice;|| insomuch that sacred Scripture saith, "Defraud not the poor of alms." Guy de Roy says, that those who do not succour the poor according to their ability, will be guilty of homicide, if, through their neglect, any of these should die.¶ St. John of God used thus to call the poor his creditors. "Make friends of the Mammon," says St. Clemens Alexandrinus; "a friend is not made by one gift, but by a long intercourse; for neither faith nor love can be produced in one day, but he who perseveres to the end shall be saved."**

The guides of the middle age are con-

* Œd. Col. 85.

† Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

‡ Or. 31.

§ In Ps. 129.

|| Vin. Bellov. Speculum Morale, Lib. iii. x. 22.

* In Cantica, Serm. 4.

† Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. xxi.

‡ Thom. à Kemp. Epist.

§ Serm. 26 de div.

|| Ser. S. Ant. de Padua.

¶ Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

** Lib. quis Dives salvet.

stantly reminding men of the admonition of Tobias, to provide against the day of necessity; adding, that is the day of death and the day after death, when man truly wants mercy; and as St. Ambrose saith, mercy is the sole companion of the dead; therefore, they conclude, that it is great wisdom to give mercifully to the poor for God—that this is a wisdom not earthly, animal, diabolic, but a wisdom which is from above. Indifference to the poor they had so often warned them against, that they could not miss the scope at which they aimed. Indeed, the homily of St. Cæsarius of Arles on the last judgment, which is designed to inculcate works of mercy, would alone explain the phenomena presented in the extraordinary solicitude for relieving the poor, which distinguished the society of the middle ages; for then the inhabitants of every city, castle, and rustic village throughout Christendom, were accustomed to hear the same admonitions, not as inquisitive, to criticise a specimen of eloquence, or as well-bred persons to assist at a benevolent assembly with civil decorum, but as listeners attentive to a voice unearthly, yea, as those laid in the grave—their hands together clasped, while busy fancy conjured up the forms of Christ's terrific advent. After repeating the words of the gospel respecting the doom of souls, that terrible voice of our Lord at once to be feared and desired, he continues to address his hearers in the following terms:—"Who, on hearing these words, would not at the same time tremble and rejoice, since Christ promises to his servants a kingdom—to sinners everlasting fire? Hear, I beseech you, dearest brethren, this lesson with your whole hearts! let it sink deep into your minds! For whoever receives this lesson in a teachable spirit, if even he be incapable of understanding the rest of the Scriptures, may, by it alone, learn to do every good work, and to flee every evil one. Observe, then, what our Lord promises to say to those who shall sit on his right hand:—"Come, he blessed! for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat." Whilst to those at his left hand he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed! for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat." He did not say, Depart from me, because ye have committed theft, or murder, or other deeds of the kind; but, because from your substance, ye have not given to the poor. As they on the right hand will be redeemed by almsgiving, so they on the left will be condemned for the neglect of it. He will not say to these, Come, ye blessed, because ye have not sinned! nor to those, Depart,

ye cursed, because ye have sinned! but because ye have refused to redeem your sins by almsgiving. No man without sin ever did or can exist; but every man, with God's aid, can redeem his sins. God has said, "Whoever feedest not the hungry, and clothest not the naked, shall be sent into everlasting fire." If he is to be damned who giveth not to the poor, what shall be the fate of him who hath taken what is another's? If he is in hell who would not receive the stranger into his house, where is he who hath expelled the owner from his house? If fire be the lot of him who has not clothed the naked, what is reserved for him who makes naked the clothed? Wherefore, my dearest brethren, adhere to almsgiving, to works of mercy, which will not suffer the doer to labour in darkness. O soul, which dwellest within fleshly perishable walls, give whilst thou canst—give unto thyself from thine own substance! for fleeting is what thou possessest, and God offers thee a kingdom in exchange for thy works of mercy."

The holy fathers meet the objection which is so often raised against almsgiving by men who urge their domestic necessities. "Let us give to Jesus Christ the vestments of earth," says St. Cyprian, "to receive from him the vestments of heaven. Let us give the food and drink of this world, that we may assist one day with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at the everlasting banquet." "*Da pauperi ut des tibi*," says St. Peter Chrysologus, "*da tectum, accipe cælum*." After repeating the words, "He who hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord," a writer of the thirteenth century exclaims, "O earthly and cupidinous sons of Adam! why do ye not attend? why do ye not negotiate? why do ye not lend on such usuries, without sin, and for an ineffable gain? Why to faithful bargains and to most lucrative markets doth the avarice of worldlings turn so deaf an ear, as if sleeping on the earth? Alas! to what Jew, to what sacrilegious person will ye delay to give little for much, a temporal for an eternal, a corruptible for an incorruptible treasure?"

The universal doctor had argued in the same manner: "O man! why seek to enrich thyself with that of which thy neighbour hath need? why appropriate to thyself what should be communicated to the poor? Dost thou wish to be a skilful merchant, an egregious usurer, a prudent mercenary? Give what thou canst not retain, that thou mayest gain things which thou canst not lose; give little, that thou mayest receive an hundred fold; give what belongs to another,

that thou mayest obtain an eternal inheritance?"*

"But you will say," observes St. Cyprian, "we have a numerous family, which prevents us from giving abundant alms." Precisely the more children you have, the greater ought to be your alms. You have to pray the Lord for many persons; you have to efface the sins, to purify the conscience, to redeem the life, of many persons. Thus Job offered a multitude of sacrifices for his children; and the more numerous they were, the more victims did he immolate to the Lord."†

In the legend of the hermit instructed in the diverse and obscure judgments of God, the angel kills the child of the rich man, who received them to hospitality, and assigns as the reason, afterwards, that the father, formerly a man most charitable to the poor, had since the birth of his son neglected to practise works of mercy, and had kept every thing for his son.‡

The Catholic rule, therefore, was, to give alms without fear of doing injury to others. "The beginning of avarice," says St. John Climachus, "is to pretend alms; but its end is a hatred of the poor."§ And St. Augustin showed the groundlessness of such fears, demanding, "An putas qui Christum pascit à Christo non pascitur?"||

These sentiments passed current with the people, and gave rise to proverbial sayings in every nation, such as that of the Spaniards, "that to give alms will never lessen the purse." In the legend of John the Almoner, we read of one who gave immense alms, from having found by experience that the more he gave to the poor, the richer he became; and ancient writers have taken pains to collect numerous examples in proof of the justice of this general observation.¶

In the time of Tertullian, every one set aside what he destined to the poor once a month;** and besides contributing to this general deposit, brought his oblations to the altar. In the middle ages, the rule concerning the proper quantity of alms was reasonable and strictly just. We find it delivered in this manner:—"Your goods are either necessary to support your decent state in society, or not. If not, you are bound to give alms of them, even to the poor who

are not in peril of extreme necessity; if they are, you are not bound to give alms of them so as to disable yourself from living according to the decency of your state, unless the poor who are in such indigence that notable signs appear in them of extreme necessity, either present or proximate; for to other poor you are held to give alms in time and place, so as not to derogate from your own power of living according to the decency of your condition."* That this was not a dead letter is certain, for history displays it in action.

We read that William Ferrier and his wife Constantia, the parents of St. Vincent the celebrated Dominican, inhabiting Valencia, after their first dissipated years, made it a rule to give to the poor whatever remained of their annual revenues after providing for the proper maintenance of their house.†

In respect to the giving of alms, the Catholic society of the middle ages seems to have resembled, as far as relates to the external act, the people described by Thucydides, with whom it was counted more disgraceful not to give to one who asked, than not to receive after having asked.‡ We read, in fact, of many men who, with the bitter pang of self-remorse were smitten, and who did condemn themselves to severe penance for having neglected on some occasion to relieve a beggar. Hermann Barth, master of the Teutonic order, before his pilgrimage to the East, while almoner of the king of Denmark, in Lubeck, during a cold winter's day, had repulsed with harsh words a poor woman with her children, who sought alms. Soon afterwards, these poor creatures were found frozen to death. Admonished in a dream of the impending judgment of God, and terrified at the result of his own barbarity, he made a vow to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There he was given an office in the German hospital, in which he so distinguished himself by his piety, his zeal for the poor, and his gentle solicitude towards the sick, as also for his valour in battle against the infidels, that he was elected master of the order.§

Such a case was most rare; but when an occasion of the kind did occur in ages of faith, the anxiety was not how to hush up the event as quickly as possible, and then banish it from the memory; for there entered too many elements of a religious nature into the composition of men's minds, when

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. vi. † De Eleem

‡ Guy de Roye, Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

§ Grad. xvi.

|| St. August. Lib. de Eleem.

¶ Speculum Mor. Lib. iii. x.

** Apol. 39.

* Apol. iii. x. 19.

† Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. tom. iii. Lib. 17.

‡ Thucyd. Lib. ii. cap. 97.

§ Voight, Geschichte Preussens, ii. 58.

the doctrine of future judgment was current, to give much scope to the action of those prudential maxims with which the men of our days dole out their miserable pittance to the poor.

St. Francis of Assisium, in his youth, while following the trade of his father, having refused on one occasion, contrary to his custom, to give alms to a poor man who asked it for the love of Christ, was suddenly so moved to compunction, that he immediately afterwards made him a great donation, and promised to God from that hour never to refuse alms again to any one who should ask him. Pope Leo thought he had offended a poor man whom he found at his gate. Returning, he led him into his private chamber, and made him lie down on his own bed.*

Justine, a Panigaleo, who had migrated from the Observantins to the Capuchins, exercised the office of guardian in the convent of Narni, before the building of that house was completed. It happened, one evening that a certain poor stranger arrived there at sunset, and asked for lodging. Dominicus, a Buschetto, who had charge of the door, gave him a loaf of bread, but declined admitting him, on the ground of the building not being finished, and of their own great poverty. The stranger took the bread, and said, "I know that you are poor, but I am not ignorant of what you can do;" and without more words, turned his back and departed. This incident was sufficient to plunge the whole community into the deepest affliction. The porter immediately disclosed what he had done to the guardian, who replied, "Alas, my son! we have committed a grievous sin—we have denied lodging to our Saviour—we have driven from our gate the Lord of angels! Woe to us disdainful, ungrateful men!" and then he wept bitterly. During many days and nights he had no rest; for the words of the beggar, "Lo, I depart rejected!" seemed to sound in his ears, and he thought that he could never sufficiently lament having refused him a night's lodging.†

Eckehard the First, master of the school of St. Gall, in the time of the emperor Otho I., and one of the most learned men of his age, would not, on one occasion, permit a certain stranger to be ill-treated by the servants of the hospice, for pretending to be lame and suffering himself to be carried,

when the discovery of his deceit was made by his springing out of the bath when the servants poured in more hot water instead of cold, on his complaint in Welsh, crying "Caldo," which they understood to mean "too cold."*

Every circumstance of human life, whether of joy or sorrow, triumph or adversity, was deemed an occasion that called for a distribution of alms to the poor. What generous liberality was evinced towards them by the inhabitants of Lyons during the splendid festivities in the year 1559, which were celebrated in that city to express the public joy on the restoration of peace between the Christian kings!†

The custom of leading an ox through the streets of Marseilles, on the festival of Corpus Christi, and probably of exhibiting another in Paris during the carnival, however systematically perverted in later times, from the supposed discovery of its being a remnant of Paganism, originated in nothing else but the charity of certain pious confraternities, which had bound themselves at these seasons to regale the poor. Drexelius mentions an instance of a marriage feast at which three hundred poor persons were benignantly entertained; the bride and bridegroom serving up the dinner, and waiting upon them till the end of the banquet.‡ On any great deliverance we read even of the common soldiers giving up part of their day's provision in alms to the poor. The least circumstance was sufficient to touch the hearts of men of faith, and induce them to practise works of mercy.

Atto, bishop of Troyes, when sick, gave every thing that he possessed to the poor; and we have the letter which St. Bernard wrote to him on his recovery, praising him for that act of wisdom. "Above all royal treasures," saith he, "this title of poverty doth now ennoble and render you illustrious. Job is praised because he endured his losses patiently; and shall a bishop not be praised, who willingly gave up and liberally distributed? He did not wait till the hour of death, when he could neither give nor retain; but while suspended between the hope of life and the fear of death, living and willing, he dispersed and gave to the poor, that his justice might remain for ever; for it is more fitting that the priests of God should be clothed with justice than with gold or silk. O wondrous clemency of God towards you!

* Vincent Bellov. Specul. Moral. Lib. iii. p. x. d. 21.

† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1547.

* Eckehard in Cas. S. Galli, c. 89, 10.

† Paradin, Hist. de Lyon, Lib. iii. c. 31.

‡ De Eleem. pars iii. c. 7.

He wounded the flesh, that the soul might be healed; he killed avarice, that you might live to justice.*

To mourners, indeed, belonged in an especial manner the duty of liberality to the poor. Monteil gives the narrative of a forlorn wanderer in the fourteenth century, travelling through a part of France where there were few towns or human habitations. "I walked," says the beggar, "slowly on loaded with age and misery, and looked on all sides if I could see any Christian that would give me bread. Presently an old woman who had a goat that was grazing by the side of the road said to me, 'Run, run! the people of that great castle which you see yonder have published since many days, for three leagues about, that they give alms.' I hastened thither, and found that they gave two sous to every one; and the person who distributed the alms said to each one, 'Pray God for his humble servant, the high and puissant lord, the late baron, our master!' Such was the case when Louis de Sancerre died, who ordered in his will that the alms should be cried through the country for two leagues round. At the funeral of Pierre de Luxembourg, there were more than ten thousand poor, of whom thirty-eight were clothed; bread and meat were distributed to all.† At the funerals of the great, hundreds of poor men used to be clothed in black or grey stuff, who walked in procession with lighted flambeaux.‡

On the death of Charlemagne, his son Louis inspected his treasure of gold and silver and precious stones; and after giving what was legal to his sisters, distributed all the remainder among the poor, chiefly widows, orphans, strangers, and indigent priests; giving all for his father's soul, and reserving nothing for himself but one silver table of a triple form, as if composed of three shields joined in the centre, which he kept for love of his father; and even this he redeemed with a price which he added to the alms for his soul.§

* Epist. xxiii.

† Monteil refers to the will of René, king of Sicily in 1474; *Mémoires de Comines*; *Antiq. de Rouen*, par Taillepié, chap 53, on the funeral of George d'Amboise; *Testamentum Humberti II.*; Delphini, Jean Chartier, *Hist. de Charles VII.*; *Hist. de la Maison de Courtenai*, par Dubouchet, giving the will of Jean de Courtenai in 1510; *l'Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, par Lebeuf, chapters, Montmorenci, Ecouen, Louvres.

‡ Testament de Banduin Desplancques, in 1482, in *l'Hist. de la Maison de Béthune*; and the Testament of Jean de Courtenay, in 1510, in the *Mémoires de Comines. Preuves.*

§ *Hist. de Gestis Ludovici Pii viii.*

Nor was the distribution of alms confined to the days of burial, or those immediately subsequent; for it continued to be made on every anniversary, as is attested by many ancient tombs, as I remarked on that of Jerome Vignola, in the church of St. Julian at Venice. Thus, on each anniversary of Peter de Nemours, bishop of Paris, who died in 1220, there were always one thousand loaves given to as many poor persons.* The alms formerly given at Westminster Abbey, on the anniversaries of our different kings that lie there entombed, were very considerable; but what shall we say of those mites given every where by pious children, in every rank of life, when revolving years brought back remembrance of the day that a father or a mother died? "Ah! suffer me to mourn for my friend, the holy priest Francis Zaghio," says Bernardine Scardeoneo, in his *History of Padua*, "too soon taken from us by a premature fate. He was dear to me from his boyhood; and though in age he might have been my son, I not only loved him as a brother, but revered him as a father. His discourse was generally on the passion of Christ, and on works of mercy. Every year he used to celebrate holy rites, on stated days, for his departed mother's soul; and on these occasions he would afterwards invite a few of his friends, and place at the table twelve poor men—blind, lame, and beggars—whose feet he washed; and then, though he had but a slender patrimony, he used to give alms to a crowd of poor persons.†

The going on a pilgrimage was another occasion on which men felt bound to exercise more than ordinary liberality to the poor; for, in short, no pious practice of the Catholic religion was deemed whole and sound without the accompaniment of alms. Behold, for instance, Robert Duke of Normandy setting out for the Holy Land, with an honourable escort. "What tongue," exclaims William of Jumièges, "what words could relate the abundant alms which he distributed daily to the poor? What widow, what orphan, what poor person, was seen by him without being consoled at his expense? In fine, he arrived at the venerable sepulchre, in which had reposed the thrice holy body of the King of Heaven. What pen could describe the torrents of tears with which he watered this tomb during eight days, or relate how many presents in gold he piled upon it?"‡

* *Gallia Christiana*, tom. i. 488.

† Bern. Scard. de *Antiq. Patavii*, Lib. ii. cap. 6.

‡ *Hist. Norman. Lib. vi. 12.*

Louis I., Count of Blois, who was so moved by the preaching of that miraculous man, Foulques, curate of Neuilly-sur-Marne, that he took the cross with Baldwin, Count of Flanders, before his departure signalized his charity towards the hospital of Chateaudun, and the chapter of Chartres, as well as towards the monks of Val Dieu in that city.* St. Adalbert, of Prague, intending to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, prepared for the journey, not by amassing money, but by distributing all he had to the poor. Even a large sum which the Empress Theophania, consort of Otho II., then at Rome, gave him, he secretly applied to the relief of the indigent.

Above all, to penitents, bounty to the poor was an indispensable condition of their reconciliation with the Church; so that, as the historian of Bologna testifies, many cities of Italy felt the happy effects of the memorable year of devotion which saw the great movement of the pacific host, which Rainerio of Perugino, the blessed hermit, first levied; for of their repentance many charitable confraternities, such as that at Bologna, of the hospital of St. Mary, are standing monuments.†

When the Emperor Charles V. came to Rome, in 1536, his confessor Garsias de Loaysa took care to remind him of the injuries which his troops had inflicted on that city. Therefore, besides making great presents to every church, he left a deposit which was to be employed in enabling a certain number of poor maidens to marry, each of whom was to receive from three hundred to two hundred crowns, and also made a noble distribution of alms in every quarter of the city. His confessor seems to have been greatly moved by the cases of suffering which he then observed, consequent upon the sack of Rome; for on his return to Spain, being made archbishop of Seville, we find him sending to that city every year, out of his own revenues, five hundred gold crowns.‡

Let us hear a late traveller's account of Catholic manners, in a country which had at that time escaped the influence of the modern opinions. "In Portugal," saith he, "marriages, christenings, and funerals, are generally followed by a liberal distribution of alms. The inhabitants of Lisbon do not fancy themselves contaminated by coming into contact with their indigent brethren,

for whom they almost invariably show a friendly solicitude. They are not to be persuaded that there is death in the touch of the poor, or contagion in their shadows; they know them to be heirs of the same hope, and regard them as objects whom Heaven has surrendered to their bounty. Hence they have no surly mastiffs or pampered menials to drive the children of indigence from their doors. The Portuguese is never harsh to the poor, however importunate they may be: if unable to relieve the applicant, he conveys the denial with a kind look of sympathy. 'The Lord prosper you, my brother!' is the most usual mode of dismissal. If he accede to the request, his manners seem to indicate that it is an honour conferred upon himself. The general phrase is, 'Do me the pleasure of accepting this trifle;' when he respectfully touches his hat, and moves on. Instances of sturdy beggars are very rare, for a man in health scorns to invade the patrimony of the infirm. If compelled by distress to solicit relief, he will often check your liberality, by declining to take more than is requisite for his present support. From the earliest age, tenderness and solicitude for the poor are unceasingly inculcated. Children are generally the almoners of the family; and it is delightful to witness the alacrity with which they will break up their games and abandon their amusements, at the first summons to this important duty. Religion perfects what the habits of the nursery had commenced, and charity becomes blended with their very being."*

Do you mark, reader, how the manners of the middle ages have been preserved with the ancient faith; and how, under that blessed influence, the poor and the rich are every where the same?

In the ancient books we find ascribed to innumerable persons that trait which St. Jerome records of St. Paula, who used to think she had suffered a great loss, if any one else but herself nourished the sick or hungry poor. *Dammum putabat, si quisquam debilis et esuriens cibo sustentaretur alterius.*† During the famine in 1504, when the people of Lyons, and of the country around it, made such devout processions barefoot, imploring the mercy of heaven, Paradin mentions that there was the greatest emulation among the citizens to determine who would give most alms to the poor.‡

* Berniers, *Hist. de Blois*, 305.

† Sigonii de *Epis. Bonon. Lib. iii.*

‡ Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv.* 26.

* Letters to Osorius.

† *Epist. xxvii.*

‡ *Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. c. 16.*

We have before seen what care was taken in all ages of Catholic civilization to inculcate hospitality, as a work of the blessed merciful. Origen saith, "Let the old man run, let the old woman hasten, let the boy be active, let no one be slow in such works." "O man," cries Alanus de Insulis, "if thou knowest thyself to be a stranger and a pilgrim on this earth, thou wilt not refuse lodging to a stranger; for if thou shouldst exclude the poor of Christ from thy roof, thou wilt exclude Christ himself from a lodging in thy breast."* A writer of the thirteenth century says, "Let hospitality be given cheerfully, and, above all, constantly; for let no one imitate the Jews, who in one and the same week received our Lord processionally into their state, and then ejected and crucified Him."† By hospitality is acquired the knowledge of God, as was seen in the two disciples going to Emmaus, who were illuminated not by hearing, but by entertaining our Lord, and also infusion of grace, as was proved in Zaccheus, into whose house, with the Divine Guest, salvation entered. At the gates of cities, in the twilight hour, might be often found gentle youths, deputed by their hospitable parents, to stand there on the look-out for strangers in distress, who courteously unto love's table bade the welcome guest. That hospitality of this kind should have been exercised not alone by the inhabitants of wild and unfrequented places, but also by the elegant and highly refined communities of Italy, in the ages of most perfect social organization, is a fact not a little remarkable. Ambrose Leo says, "that nothing gives such pleasure to the citizens of Nola as to receive guests."‡

At Brettinovo, in Romagna, a town beautifully situated on a mountain, the chief families, in the time of the Guido del Duca, sung by Dante, used often to have contentions with one another, when a stranger arrived, for the honour of receiving him to hospitality; to prevent which, in future, a pillar was erected in the market place, to which were fastened as many rings as there were fathers of families; and as soon as a stranger hung his horse's bridle on one of them, the family to whom it belonged claimed him as their guest, and entertained him with all honour and humanity.§

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. c. 37.

† Speculum Moral. Lib. iii. p. x.

‡ De Nola, Lib. iii. c. 6.

§ Leandri Alberti Descript. Italie, 467.

Every one has heard that when the friar Jerome Savonarola was preaching at Florence, vast crowds of strangers of all ranks came to that city, in order to assist at his sermons; but few perhaps are aware, that on that occasion these strangers were received gratuitously into the houses of the Florentines, several of whom, through Christian hospitality, used to lodge under their roof as many as from twenty to forty; and not only did they give them lodging and food, but these rich citizens used to wait on them with their own hands at table. Severe to themselves, and full of compassion for their neighbour, they revived the simplicity, innocence, and pious liberality of the first Christians.*

The ingenious delicacy, too, of the Portuguese was characteristic of Catholic manners, in relation to the poor in every country. That courteous style, which gave rise to the custom of dating letters from your house at Paris or Lyons, from your castle in Languedoc or Normandy, as if one gave one's own house to the person to whom one wrote,† was not confined to intercourse between equals and the great. "Those rich men are to be considered unjust," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Angelo Politian, "who instead of remembering God and the poor, call themselves proprietors of riches, when they are themselves rather the property of riches. On the contrary, they are just and happy who, amidst great riches, esteem themselves ministers of God, tutors of the poor, dispensers of riches. Fortunate young man, who hast found such portions! I had found such long since for myself."‡ In fact, to judge by the general practice, the villa or palace of a rich man was open to every poor youth of genius that required encouragement, and to every stranger whom sickness or calamity overtook while within the range of his ordinary alms. Not to speak of those who, like Piccolomini, Duke of Amalphi, and Count of Celano, did not rest until, through the ardent love of God and affection for his servants, they had wholly given their beautiful parks and gardens to the poor that sought celestial recreation,§ it appears as if, in general, one might have gone to the house of the Catholic nobleman, in ages of faith, re-

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 23.

† Montei, Hist. des Français, tom. v. 309.

‡ Mars. Ficinus, Epist. Lib. i.

§ Muti Phæbonii Hist. Marsorum, Lib. iii. c. 7. in Thesau. Antiq. Ital. ix.

peating the words of Socrates, when he invited Aristodemus to accompany him to that of Agatho, *ὡς ἀπα καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἐνὶ δαίρας ἰσὺ αἰρέματα ἀγαθὸν*; and if a sense of one's own inferiority suggested that they were not applicable, the custom of these times would have encouraged one to proceed without referring to the authority of Homer, who makes Menelaus a worse, repair uninvited to the supper of Agamemnon, a better man.

The Counts of Cortarodula at Padua traced their title from "the court of Rodulo," which was the term applied to the castle of their munificent ancestor Rodulo Valuasorio, at the village of St. Mary Nonio, in consequence of his generosity in receiving and nourishing there men of all ranks.* Andrew Doria received indeed as his guests the Emperor Charles V. and his son Philip Maximilian, King of Bohemia, with his wife, the daughter of the emperor; but you are greatly mistaken if you suppose that the poor, and men of humble rank, were excluded from sharing his hospitality. Those palaces which he erected with royal magnificence, those delicious gardens along the sea-shore and on the mountain, those painted galleys, which were the wonder of the age, were ready at all times to receive the poorest man, as well as the prince. "Never," says Sigonius, "was he known to show a different countenance to the great and to persons of the lowest rank; and not only his house, but even his bed-room, was open to every one who wished to speak to him."† In fact, these delicious villas of the nobles of Italy and Spain were, from time to time, as the occasion might require, the retreat of the poor student, the garden of the poet, the convent of the monk, the desert of the hermit, the hospital of the sick.

St. Louis Bertrand, an Apostle of America, being seized with his last illness in Valencia, the physicians prescribed for him the country air; and no sooner was this known than the Duke of Najarra, and many other nobles, disputed with each other as to which of them might have the honour of receiving him into one of their villas. The Archbishop of Valencia, Don John de Ribera, had the preference, and during many months he served him with his own hands, gave him the medicines

and food at the proper hour, and said mass before him every day.*

Men of the middle ages might often be represented by painters in the act of imitating to the letter the good Samaritan. In the thirteenth century a nobleman of the country riding through a wood in the neighbourhood of Pavia, finds two youths, in the habit of St. Dominic, covered with blood, and stretched upon the snow. Alighting, he perceives that one of them is dead, and that the other has been grievously wounded. The latter he places upon his horse, and conveys to his own castle, whence he sends persons to provide for the burial of the other. Here, as if he had been his own son, he takes care of the stranger during many months; and on his recovery, hearing that they had been travelling to Paris, to study at that university, when they fell into the hands of assassins, he presents him with money to pursue his journey.

Every thing that could diminish the appearance of conferring an obligation, was carefully exhibited in the dispensation of mercy. Apollinarus, Patriarch of Alexandria, contrived to relieve the distress of a young nobleman, who had fallen into poverty, and in such a manner, that it seemed as if it was the young man who conferred a great favour in not requiring much more as his due.† John, the Monk of Cluni, who had written the life of St. Odo, the second abbot of that monastery, says of him, "that on a journey he used to ask the children and poor boys on the road-side to sing some ditty, in order that he might pretend to repay them with his alms."‡ The Abbot Leontius, in giving alms, used to place the money on the ground, or on the steps of churches, that it might not seem to come from his hand, but from the mother of God.§

Of Angelrann, the venerable Abbot of St. Riquier, in the reign of King Robert, we read, that as he was full of constancy and love for all subject to him, so he was also most compassionate to the poor. He used often to leave the monastery in search of people to relieve: he used then to carry with him a secret purse full of silver, and whenever he saw a poor man approach, he used to take out some denarii, and let them fall on the ground, and then he would call out to the poor man that he

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. liv. 30.

† Sophronius, Pratum Spirituale, cap. xciii.

‡ Bibliothec. Cluniacen. 33.

§ Id. cap. lix.

* Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patavii, Lib. iii. 13.

† Sigonii de Reb. gestis And. Dorizæ, Lib. ii.

might come and see what was lying there, as if he were himself surprised. Then the poor man would say, "my lord, here is money on the ground:" upon which the pious deceiver would order him to pick it up, and take it for his own, as if it was, no doubt, prepared for him by God.*

The Universal Doctor is obliged to denounce a disorder incident to many persons, he says, in prayer; who, while addressing God with their lips, are all the while thinking within themselves how they may best give alms to the poor.† Although, probably, such a distraction is at present less frequent than in the twelfth century, when it is treated as a venial sin, I have myself remarked rich persons kneeling among the poor in churches, who used to take that opportunity of dropping pieces of money into their caps, or upon their jackets which lay beside them, and thus leaving them to wonder at the unexpected grace.

St. Gregory Nazianzen praises his father for having given to his mother the whole administration of the money which he set apart for bounty, chiefly in order that the praise might not redound upon himself.

The father of St. Catherine of Sienna having given her full liberty to dispense his alms, she used to search out families that were in secret distress, and while sick and weak herself, used to carry out early in the morning loads of corn, wine, oil, and other provisions, and contrive to introduce them into the houses of some widow or poor person, who was ashamed to ask alms, and having deposited them behind the door, would then make her escape unseen.‡ Every land, in short, could tell of some subtle act of mercy, which, in respect to the delicacy of the spirit that dispensed it, resembled the gift of Nicholas,

Which on the maidens he
Bounteous bestow'd, to save their youthful prime
Unblemish'd.§

The chief public provision for the poor in ages of faith consisted in the property of the church. By the canons of the Council of Orleans, in the year 511, a third part of the offerings to the church are given to the bishop, with an injunction that he must provide for the poor and the sick; and by the Council of Tours, in 567, it is ordained, that cities, and priests

residing in the country, should nourish their respective poor, in order that these may not be obliged to remove to other places. By the canons of the Council of Clermont, in 549, it is ordered that the bishop who shall hear of there being any lepers on his territory, or in the city, must furnish them with all that is necessary.

Having already had occasion, while illustrating from history the justice of the ecclesiastical order in the middle ages, to enter into many details respecting its pious liberality, there would be at present but little to add on the subject of episcopal and monastic charity, if it were not that the object on which our attention is at present immediately fixed seems to require that we should produce some instances. We observed, that in this great work of providing for the wants of the poor, the Roman Pontiffs set an example to the world, which the Universal Church was not slow to follow. The names of Silvester I., Gregory the Great, Urban I., Leo IX., Alexander V., Innocent III., Boniface V., Adrian I., Gregory XIII., Clement VIII., Pius V., and numerous other Pontiffs on that supreme chair, must be for ever associated in the human memory with the idea of charity and munificence in the utmost perfection and degree. In the archives of Rome there is a book still extant filled with the names of those who, in Rome and in many other places, received alms from St. Gregory the Great, for he sent money to the poor of distant cities, as to those of Jerusalem, where he also founded an hospice.* So great was the liberality of Alexander V. to the poor, that he used to subtract sometimes from his daily bread to give to them, and in allusion to the effects, he used to say, "I was a rich bishop, a poor cardinal, and now I am a mendicant pope." Yet this does not prevent historians from affirming, that the riches of the Roman Church were acquired by means of her charity and alms.† During a season of scarcity, Innocent III. provided for every distressed person in Rome. Those who were ashamed to make known their poverty received assistance secretly, and others, to the number of 8000, received provisions daily. "What money he expended in this work," says an ancient writer, "He knoweth, from whom nothing is hidden." During his pontificate he employed the tenth of his

* Chronic. Centulens. sive S. Richarii, Lib. iv. cap. 8. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

† Alani de Insulis Sententie.

‡ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 14.

§ Dante, Purg.

* Drexelius de Eleemosyna, i. 4.

† Id. Pars iii. c. 5.

revenues in alms, besides other immense sums, and all oblations received at his feet. His almoner went about in search of poor and infirm persons, and to such as were noble he gave seals, so that the persons who brought them received money every week for their support. The same benignant pontiff, in a spirit of Catholic simplicity, used to suffer poor boys to come before his table at the end of his repasts, and receive the food that remained on it; and every Saturday he used to wash and kiss the feet of twelve poor persons, and give money to each.*

"O what was the grief of all men," cries Hugo, bishop of Ostia, describing the death of Eugene the Third to the chapter of Cîteaux. "What especially were the lamentations of widows and orphans! you would say that he must be already with God who is so lamented by the people.† Such was the type of all ecclesiastical princes. If you ask to behold the treasures of the Church, she presents to you the poor; if you inquire into her means of defence, it is again to the suppliant poor that you are referred. "The prayers of the poor are my defence," said St. Ambrose to the emperor; "those blind, those lame, those aged persons, are more powerful than the stoutest warriors."‡ If you inquire to what end the Church has been endowed with wealth and property, you are told that it is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and, according to the necessities of time and circumstance, to relieve the poor of Christ. The prodigious alms of the church of Toledo to the poor, who were ashamed to beg, are described by the old Spanish historians,§ while modern writers only descant on its grandeur and its privileges; and what think you, reader, were those of York, and Canterbury, and Durham, and those other English sees, whose bounty to the just and needy is gone by, not through their fault, but his who first taught kings, with impious and insane violence, to abolish the discipline of Rome? Bartholomew de Martyribus indeed lamented the disposition of those who first introduced splendour into the archiepiscopal palace at Bragva, in which he would only occupy a small room, which he fitted up like a cell; yet these palaces were built by holy men of

charity, with the express view, it is said, of leaving no pretence to successors for not residing, or for not being bountiful to God's poor. If you are led at moments to feel surprise at the magnificence of the episcopal state in the middle ages, your suspicions and jealousies are quickly dissipated when you find that the feast is for the hungry, the delicacies for the lame and the blind. "Largus muneribus, sibi parvus," say the biographers of Gui de Sulley, Archbishop of Bourges, in the thirteenth century.* And this is the testimony in most cases. When St. Ansbart, Abbot of Fontanelle, made his first entry into Rouen, as bishop of that see, in the seventh century, and a grand entertainment was given to persons of all classes, we read that the largest table was for the poor, and that the prelate having caused every one to be placed according to his rank, then seated himself among the poor.† You find the same usage after a lapse of eight centuries, when Yves Mayeuc, Confessor of Queen Anne of Brittany, made his first entry into Rennes, after being consecrated bishop of that see, for he ordered the gates of his palace to be opened, and a table to be provided during many days, not alone for the canons and great men of the city, but for all the poor, on whom he waited with his own hands.‡ Garsias de Loaysa, Archbishop of Seville, gave a fund to supply 1000 ducats every year for marriage portions to poor orphan maidens of the city of Talavera.§ It is highly curious to compare the constant zeal in this respect, and the corresponding deeds of men who are accused by the modern teachers of "forbidding to marry," with the theories and deeds of the same teachers, who seem to regard the marriage of the poor as detrimental to the state, and who are actually in some countries enforcing measures, which when practised by the Spaniards upon the Indians in America, were denounced by the Dominican friars to the government of Spain as incompatible with the profession of Christianity. Certainly the contrast is most singular, and if it were only as a lively remark, I am surprised that our contemporaries have not indulged in it, though even at the risk of placing their own guides in an unenviable position. A few instances

* Gesta Innocentii III. 143.

† Epist. S. Bern. cccxxxvii.

‡ Serm. de Basil., non trad.

§ Lucii Marinei Siculi de Reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. ii.

* Gall. Christ. tom. i.

† Aigrad. Vita S. Ansberti apud Bolland. ad 9 Feb.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. iv. 25.

§ Id. iv. 26.

will show what kind of evidence Catholicism can produce here. Let us note some.

Pius V. signalized the first years of his pontificate by giving marriage portions to an immense number of poor maidens. Prodigious sums, for the same purpose, were given by Peter de Tapia, Bishop of Segovia, and by other Spanish prelates. Louis de Vervens, Archbishop of Narbonne, used to give every year 12,000 livres, in marriage portions, to the poor maidens of that city and diocese; and he provided that the same sum should be similarly paid for ever.* Cardinal John de Torquemada, Master of the Sacred Palace, whose works of mercy entitle him to as much renown as his learned writings in defence of the faith, besides giving prodigious alms to the poor, founded, in 1460, in the Dominican convent of the Minerva at Rome, a congregation charged with giving a dower every year to twelve poor maidens, on the festival of the Annunciation. Such was the origin of this celebrated confraternity, which was afterwards so much enriched by sovereign pontiffs, cardinals, Roman princes, and nobles, that after three centuries, it was able to give every year sixty Roman crowns, and a dress of white serge, to more than 400 maidens. Pius V. gave 5,000 gold crowns to its fund. So greatly was this establishment esteemed by the popes, that they always went in cavalcade, accompanied by the cardinals and the Roman nobility, in order to distribute with their own hands the tickets to those who were to receive them†. Innumerable were the young persons whom the charity of Thomas Carbonel, Bishop of Sigüenza, enabled to marry, and establish themselves with decency. How affecting must it have been to behold the 2,000 children, who came amidst all the inhabitants of Sigüenza, to welcome back this holy prelate, when he returned to them after his absence at the court of Charles II. to whom he had been appointed confessor, and from which he could only get permission to depart by appealing to the canons of the Church, and to Pope Innocent XI.‡ Nicholas Albergatus, Bishop of Bologna, gave up all his episcopal revenues, retaining only what was necessary for his own subsistence, in order chiefly to give marriage portions to poor maidens,

and the remainder he employed in supporting learned men.* Such importance was attached to charity in this form, that by the canon laws the goods of a fraternity, founded for the purpose of enabling poor persons to marry, could not be alienated without solemnities.† These Roman priests, "who forbid men to marry," take very strange measures, methinks, to secure obedience and accomplishment of prophecy. But let us mark the more ordinary course of episcopal mercy to the indigent.

Maurice, Archbishop of Rouen, who had owed his education to the charity of a convent, when elected Archbishop in 1231, finding that the annual income amounted to 12,000*l.*, gave orders that the expense of his family should never exceed 3000, and that all the rest should be given to the poor, as to the rightful owners.‡ Simon Salterelli, Archbishop of Pisa in 1323, chose four ancient inhabitants of that city, on whose probity and experience he could rely, and charged them with the office of selecting the best objects for his alms. By their hands he gave the greatest part of his revenues, and even of other personal property which devolved upon him, to widows, orphans, and ruined families, who, through delicacy, could not make known publicly their distress.§ St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence gave orders to his servants that no poor person should ever be sent away empty handed. He was reduced sometimes to the necessity of selling his furniture, and even his clothes, to meet the demands of his charity. He had no horses, and one mule sufficed for his service, and he sold this animal to give the price to the poor, but it was purchased by a rich citizen of Florence, who did not fail to send it back as a present to the Archbishop. Notwithstanding this continual expenditure he was able to make a permanent foundation for the relief of poor families that were ashamed to ask alms, in the college of St. Martin, in which he established twelve administrators, and which prospered so well, that when Touron wrote his History, it used to support 600 poor families. On founding this college the saint observed, that he was working for some families which were then rich, but which would one day be in distress; and the event verified his prediction. The charity of Cardinal Orsini, when Archbishop

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 393.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 21.

‡ Id. tom. v. Lib. 39.

* Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. Lib. iv.

† Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miser. Person. 244.

‡ Id. i. 586.

§ Touron, tom. ii. liv. xi.

of Beneventum, was so prodigious on the two memorable occasions when the city was reduced to a heap of ruins by earthquakes, that he deserved to be styled its second founder. In the space of thirty-five years he spent there, in works of mercy, the sum of 698,593 ducats.* This reminds one of what is related of St. Charles Borromeo, that in a few days he distributed to the poor of Milan 60,000 gold crowns. Tournon proposes the question, whence did they derive such immense funds? and he shows, as in the instance of the Archbishop of Beneventum, that they were enabled to effect this by the riches of their own family, the revenues of their see, and, above all, by a wise economy and an extreme frugality, for they both lived absolutely as penitents, and their servants were content with necessities.†

Peter de Tapia, a Dominican, Bishop of Sigüenza, in the time of Philip IV., gave a memorable example of mercy to the people of his diocese; for in order to defray the expenses of a war, the minister had imposed a tax upon them, which the majority were unable to pay in money, and the government required them to give their corn and oats instead of it. The bishop was greatly moved at the view of their sufferings, and indignant at the severity with which Antony de la Tour collected the money. He resolved, therefore, to take the whole payment on himself. The king wrote to thank him for his liberality to the poor; but the bishop, on placing the sum in the hands of the collector, said to that officer, "You will do well, sir, to learn in future to command your temper. I am sorry you are going to the army, for ill will befall you there." The bishop said no more. Antonio departed, and after a short time, falling into a dispute, drew his sword against a general, and suffered death for that offence by the hands of the executioner.‡

Although it would be endless to enumerate instances of episcopal charity to the poor on ordinary occasions, I cannot refrain from adding to the examples already cited the name of Dominick de Marinis, Archbishop of Avignon. He was of a family that had been long celebrated for its mercy to the indigent. His mother, Theodora

Justiniani, was styled by St. Philip Neri, a person of all goodness, in consideration of her alms; and his father, the marquis of Bomba, in the kingdom of Naples, not content with imitating her in that respect, wrote a dialogue to excite the pity of the faithful to have compassion on the poor of Jesus Christ. Tournon says, that it would require a volume to describe the charitable acts of the Archbishop, into whose palace the poor used to enter as if it was their own home.

In the middle ages no vastness of enterprise, or splendour of works, seem to have interfered with the discharge of episcopal mercy to the wretched. The present beautiful cathedral of Sienna owes its plan and commencement to Thomas de Berta, bishop of that see, who assigned for the work great sums from its revenues, and who is precisely a prelate distinguished in the history of his order for the profusion of his alms to the poor.* On occasions of public calamity the service rendered by ecclesiastics would seem almost incredible, if it were not so well attested.

Walter de Sufield, Bishop of Norwich, in the thirteenth century, at whose tomb so many miracles were wrought, in a year of famine sold all his plate, and distributed every pennyworth among the poor. In the year 1788 De Juigné, Archbishop of Paris, gave 300,000 francs to the poor; and in the same year the Curate of St. Roch, in that city, gave to them 200,000 francs. After the troubles which afflicted Genoa, in the year 1295, the celebrated Archbishop James de Voragine gave up all his rich revenues to relieve the wants of the citizens: he sold even his furniture to give the money to the poor. An ancient writer records, that to the hospitals alone he gave as much as would have almost exhausted the resources of a king.†

When St. Thomas of Canterbury began to discharge the archiepiscopal functions, much of his time was occupied in deeds of mercy, in visiting the sick, relieving the poor, and ministering in the hospitals: daily on his knees he washed the feet of thirteen beggars, and gave to each four pieces of silver. The episcopal charity never failed, even where the means might have been supposed wanting to give it effect. St. Martin one day going to church, met a poor man naked, and ordered his archdeacon to buy instantly a vest for him;

* Italia Sacra, tom. viii.

† Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 43.

‡ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 36.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 3.

† Idem. liv. 6.

and as he delayed doing it, he took off his own in the sacristy, and gave it to the poor man; and when the archdeacon soon after came to press him to leave his prayers, and go into the church to say mass, he told him that he must first purchase a vest for him. Thus compelled by necessity, the archdeacon went out, and for five pieces of silver bought a shaggy tunic, that had been made two years, which blessed Martin put on, and when he raised the Lord's body at the altar his arms were seen naked.* Pope Gregory finding a poor man who had suffered shipwreck, and not having any thing else at hand, gave him a silver dish full of vegetables, which had been sent to him by his mother. St. Germain of Auxerre, on his return from Rome, going out of Milan, desired to give all that he had to the poor; and inquiring from his deacon if he had done so, found remaining only three denarii, which he then gave, saying to the murmuring attendant, "God has enough to feed his servants this day;" and in fact they had not proceeded far when the servant of a rich nobleman came up, and presented, them with 200 solidi from his master.† Marc Antonio Bizzonio, Bishop of Fulginas, in 1586, was proposing to set out for Rome, to visit the threshold of the Apostles, when in the act of proceeding forth, a certain nobleman fell on his knees, and besought his charity, confessing that he and his family were almost in despair through poverty. The bishop, shocked at such a recital, broke off his journey, and gave the money which it would have cost him to this distressed family.‡ When Augustin Justiniani, one of the great scholars of that period, was appointed by Leo X. to the see of Nebbio, in Corsica, on arriving in that island he found the number of poor persons so great that his means did not suffice to relieve them. But this bishop of a poor see was determined that the fruits of his learning should make amends, and for this purpose he published, with notes, two thousand and fifty copies of the Psalter, in five languages, of which he was master, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Chaldaic, and Latin; finally, this illustrious scholar abandoned all the honours and advantages that were offered to him by the learned world,—at Paris, when he was almoner to Francis I., at

London, where he was received by Sir Thomas More, at Rome, where the treasures of the Vatican must have possessed such attractions for him, in order to pass the rest of his life in his poor diocese on that island, while returning to which, in 1536, after a short absence at Genoa, where domestic affairs had required his presence, he perished in a tempest.* Gilles Foscharari, Bishop of Modena, in the sixteenth century, more than once pledged his episcopal ring and crosier, in favour of those whose distress he could not otherwise instantly relieve. The habit of St. Dominick or of St. Francis, which these men generally persisted in wearing, was, it is true, dearer to their hearts than the insignias of their ecclesiastical authority.

Had we permission to wait until more of these men of mercy passed, we might behold an Ives, who never thought that he had dined or supped unless he had entertained some poor man or stranger at his table, a Laurence, Archbishop of Dublin, in whose presence as many as sixty poor persons dined daily, an Anno, Archbishop of Cologne, in whose palace twenty-four poor men dined every day, and a multitude received alms, a Godefrid, Bishop of Amiens, who waited every day on thirteen beggars, for whom a table was prepared, a Cardinal Bellarmin, who when Archbishop of Capua, could sometimes hardly penetrate into his own house, such a crowd of poor persons pressed round the gates, all of whom received relief, who, after the example of Pope Pius V. refused to have any fire in his chamber in the severe winter months, in order that the price of the wood might be given to the poor.

But such details are interminable; let us be content with a hasty visit to the tombs of bishops, which often attest, with impressive simplicity, how well they discharged that duty of their high office. The epitaph on Leontius senior, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, was written by Fortunatus:

Quem plebs cuncta gemens confusa voce requirit,
Hinc puer, hinc juvenis deflet, et inde senes.
Nemo valet siccis oculis memorare sepultum
Qui tamen in populo vivit amore pio.
Ecclesie totum concessit in ordine censum,
Et tribuit Christo quod fuit ante suum.
Ad quem pauper opem, precium captivus habebat.
Hoc proprium reputans quod cupiebat egenus.

* Vincent. Bellov. Speculum Moral. Lib. iii. pars x. dist. 21.

† Idem.

‡ Italia Sacra, tom. i. 716.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. liv. 25.

† Lib. iv. c. 9.

The same poet had described the charities of Charentinus, Archbishop of Cologne, in verses, which were afterwards placed upon his tomb.

Si videas aliquos quacunq̃ ex gente creatos
Quamvis ignotos, mox facis esse tuos.
Pectora cunctorum reficis dulcedine verbi,
Lætificas vultu tristia corda tuo.
Pauperibus cibus es, sed et esurientibus esca,
Rite pater populi, dando salutis opem.*

In short, it is the common praise of all these Catholic prelates, as it had been of the Apostles, "that they were mindful of the poor."

From a consideration of these facts, it is not strange that some men should still be found to raise an energetic cry against the projected spoliations of ecclesiastical property; and as, in the instance which has lately occurred of a Spanish writer, to declare, although with a conviction of speaking to deaf ears, that in seizing the property of the Catholic Church, legislators are robbing the people of their best inheritance. "Politicians," saith this Spaniard, "who declaim against the riches of the clergy, do not consider the advantage that society derives from it. They would not wish to annihilate the patrimony of the poor of Christ, which is administered by the majority of the clergy with probity and exactness, if they would compare the amount of the property of the Church, her expenses and economy, with the immense patrimony of our grandees, their dissipation, and their alms. Allow the clergy to be despoiled of their revenues, and the streets will be filled with ghastly objects, houses will resound with the mournful cries of orphans and widows famishing with hunger, and the roads will be infested with miserable workmen, who receiving no wages in winter, will seize by violence what the inhumanity of their fellow-citizens denies to their necessities; for surrounded with luxury, and yielding to the most criminal passions, they expend impiously what they should spare for the poor."

But let us, in order to illustrate this subject still further, repair to a spot which abounds in every kind of interest. Let us proceed to the convent-gate, dear alike to the saint, the philosopher, the poet, the artist, the stranger, and the poor. The abbey of St. Riquier gave every day to the mendicants five sous of gold; it nourished three hundred poor, one hundred and fifty

widows, and sixty clerks. Such was the liberality of St. Anselm, when Abbot of Bec, to the poor, who were daily fed in the hospitium, that not unfrequently he persuaded his monks to send from their own table the untouched viands, so that their own support was sometimes deemed owing to a miraculous intervention of Providence; when immediately after his exhortations to confidence in God, either a vessel would arrive from England with provisions, or some rich noble visit the monastery, and leave a memorial of his benevolence. In Italy, and in the Catholic Cantons of Switzerland, I used to find at certain hours the doors of all the convents and religious houses surrounded with crowds of cheerful poor people, bringing their dishes and vessels to receive food and alms; the monks and nuns would be seen engaged in conversation with some of them, who were disclosing their wants; and each for his little history seemed always sure of meeting with a most kind and gracious ear. "As for the poor," said one of the fathers to me with whom I was conversing, while lodged in the convent of Camaldoli, among the Apennines, "there is no one around our monastery who has not something from it. The young and able are employed in some work or other, and receive wages, the old and weak, or such as are not in a condition to work, come here to our gate, and have their food daily; there is provision for all our poor brethren." St. Benedict, in a time of famine, having given whatever he could find in his abbey, ordered that in fine the last vessel of oil should be delivered to the poor.* Again, when a famine and pestilence devastated Aquitain, and many provinces of Gaul, St. Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, broke up the sacred vessels of the church, and many beautiful ornaments, and did not even spare the crowns which the Emperor Henry had left there as a memorial, and whatever he could collect he gave to the poor. One day as he rode by the way, he found two boys who had perished. Immediately dismounting he took off the willow vestment, which was next his skin, and wrapped up the dead bodies in it, and so gave them sepulture.† Bartholomew de Carranza, the Dominican, after acquiring immense literary renown in Spain and Italy, on his return to Valladolid, in 1540, from the latter country, sold all his books to succour the

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 257.

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. iii. x. 21.

† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 317.

poor during a famine, and by his advice forty poor persons were nourished within the college during many months.* In the year 1197 a new and small monastery at Heisterbach, in the diocese of Cologne, made such efforts to relieve the distress of the people during a scarcity, that in one day there were counted fifteen hundred poor at the gate. Gebhard, who was then abbot, had an ox killed every day, which together with enormous loaves of bread, was divided amongst them. The means of the house were slender, yet this bounty was continued till the coming in of the new fruits. On occasions of this kind the presence of a monastery was always attended by the same effects, and it will be curious to remark, in future ages, whether, when similar circumstances occur, the lay possessors, to whom the governments of Europe have consigned the houses of the religious, will be as insensible as the former proprietors to the loss of domestic treasures, in their zeal for relieving the wants of their distressed brethren; and also whether a minister of commerce in the capital, or a bench of magistrates on the spot, will be either able or willing to administer equal relief to the sufferers. In the year 1770, and that which succeeded, when a dreadful famine prevailed in Switzerland, Nicholas, Abbot of Einsiedelin, applied all the resources of the abbey to relieve the people. At immense expense were provisions of various kinds transported out of Italy over Mount St. Gothard, and distributed amongst them. The bread was baked within the abbey itself, and divided; and, besides, all the usual alms were given in an increased measure, for which charity the whole country afterwards formally expressed its gratitude.† Calmet shows that it was the ancient custom in all the principal houses of the order of St. Benedict, to give to the poor the tithe of all the revenues, whether of corn, wine, cattle, or money, without reckoning private, secret, and extraordinary alms.‡ Thus Franco, Abbot of Lobes, in the reign of Louis-le-Debonnaire, made a decree that all tenths should be given for the use of the poor and strangers at the gate of his monastery.§ And similarly to the ancient statutes of the abbey of St. Peter at Corby, given by the holy Abbot

Adalard, in the year 822, we read that a tenth of all things belonging to the house was to be given to the poor.* In the celebrated monastery of St. Maximinus, near Treves, there was a custom religiously observed, from the tenth till the seventeenth century, of giving twice a week a large portion of bread to every poor person who came for it, and as many as six hundred often applied. During the distribution the gates were closed, and all chariots were obliged to wait outside until the pious work was finished, which ordinance, it is said, displeased some rich men in latter times. The ancient statutes of Corby expressly sanction what some potentates before the revolution stigmatized as an abuse. "If strangers," they say, "should come from distant provinces exceeding the usual number of those relieved, the porter must provide what is necessary for them, but so as not to diminish any thing from those who are daily relieved."† Then follows incidental evidence, that this discipline did not lead to an abuse of charity, for there is a remarkable provision made in the event of there being but a small number to seek alms. After stating what provisions must be daily given at the gate of Corby, there is this sentence: "If it should happen at any time that fewer people come, the hospitalier and the porter are to keep this circumstance in mind, in order that another time, when more persons may arrive, what was then left may be distributed.‡ Never less than four denarii in money are to be given daily at the gate, besides wood, and clothes, and vessels." The holy abbot adds the following injunction: "We beseech all persons, therefore, who may be appointed to offices in this monastery, that in point of largesse and distribution they may attend rather to the will of God than to the example of our parsimony; since every one will have to render an account for himself."§

This was a reflection which members of the monastic order seem to have been at no time disposed to forget. Burkhard, Abbot of St. Gall, would sometimes return bare-foot, having given his shoes to the poor; and when his Chamberlain used to complain of the state of his wardrobe, in consequence of his charities, he used to reply, "If you do not give me what I ask, I know one that will; for the Dean, often to assist me, hides articles of clothing under the covering of my bed, that I may find them there."||

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. 29.

† Tschudi Einsiedlische Chronik. 194.

‡ Comment. sur la Règle de S. Ben. tom. i. c. iv.

§ Fulcuinus de Gestis Abbatum Lobiensium apud Dacher. Spicil. tom. vi. p. 558.

* Statuta Antiqua Corbeiensis, cap. vi. apud Dacher. Spicleg. tom. iv. † Id. cap. iv.

‡ Id. cap. iv.

§ Id. cap. v.

|| Ekkehard de Casibus S. Galli, cap. x.

We have already seen, that St. Gregory the Great gave to a poor sailor not only all the money he had in his monastery, but also a piece of plate which belonged to his mother; and it was supposed by his biographer John the Deacon, that his subsequent elevation to the pontificate was the reward of that act. Adjoining his monastery he maintained a house of entertainment for the poor, and every day he gave dinner to twelve poor strangers at his own table. This was the custom of many abbots. Hear a capitulary of the Carthusians read. "Our Lord Jesus Christ says in his Gospel, give alms, and lo all things are clean to you. Therefore, we exhort and implore all priors of our order, in the bowels of the same God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered himself to be suspended on the wood of the cross for us, that according to the faculty of their respective houses, they would apply their whole hearts to giving great alms. For there is nothing so accordant with nature, as that we should do to others what we would desire to have done to ourselves in a similar necessity.*" Even the prejudiced author of a modern history of Glastonbury, expresses admiration at the vast number of charitable foundations made by the monks of that abbey for all kinds of distress. Brother Silvester was moved to embrace the order of St. Francis merely by witnessing the generous liberality of Brother Bernard Quintavalle to the poor.† We read of Capuchin friars, who, when they could not assist the poor in any other manner, used to beg leather or cloth from their relations, and make shoes and clothes with what was given them for the poor.‡ Regenbodo, a monk of Hirschau, used to give so much of his own allowance to the poor, that he left himself to suffer hunger and thirst, for it was the custom in the ninth century for each monk to receive a portion for his own support during the year.§ Bartholomew de Martyribus, in his latter days, living retired in his convent of the holy cross at Viane, used to devote himself wholly to the instruction and comfort of the poor. Returning one Sunday evening, after preaching in the country, he met a number of indigent persons, to whom he gave all that he had; but one poor old widow, coming after the rest, and stating that she had not even a bed for her daughter, he appointed her to come

under the convent wall, at a certain hour, when, on his return he tied up his own bed, and after nightfall let it down from his window. The poor mother was below to receive it, and the friars did not discover, till after many days, that their illustrious brother had only the boards of his bed to sleep upon.

In the year 1740, notwithstanding the most deplorable spoliation which had been suffered at Jumièges, the monks of that abbey furnished bread to six or seven hundred poor. This munificent charity was practised by that community to the last hour of its existence, so that when the revolution forced Dom Bride, the Prior, to fly from the house, he set out, accompanied with the prayers and tears of the surrounding people.*

But to recite the services of the monks, collectively and individually, to the poor, would be an interminable labour. It is enough to refer the reader to the lives of any eminent members of the monastic institute, which will soon convince him that, in respect to mercy, the character of an Angel-rann, or a St. John of God, was typical of them all. In reading their annals, however, and indeed the history of the middle ages in general, one cannot but feel some degree of surprise, on remarking the number of instances in which extraordinary erudition, which might be thought to leave no time or memory for such works, was combined with the most tender solicitude for the poor; instances which seem to indicate that faith had restored that supposed pristine order of nature, traces of which it was thought had been faintly discerned by those philosophers who had investigated the secrets of things, and who remarked, that merciful persons were inclined to historical researches and moral studies. Aristotle, in treating on physiognomy, ascribes to the merciful, as their sign, the disposition of being curious inquirers respecting manners, and always communicative; on which passage, Cocles, of Bologna, a physician of the middle ages, comments, and adds, that their cell of memory is greatly enlarged: "Memoriter nam retinent et libenter recitant facta hominum et gesta, præcipue ab antiquo."† Michael Scott affirms, that they are great watchers by night, and of subtle genius.‡

What these curious investigators deemed conformable to nature, was seen realized in the great historians and philosophers of their

* Annales Ord. Cartusiensis, tom. i. Lib. iii. cap. xx.

† Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs, Lib. i. 27. ‡ Annales Capucinarum, an. 1539.

§ M. Gerbert, Historia Nigræ Silvæ, l. 125.

* Deshayes, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Jumièges, p. 162.

† Magistri Bartholomei Coclitis Bononiensis. Physiognomistæ Anastasis, Lib. i. p. 20.

‡ Michael Scott, Lib. Physiognomistæ, cap. xlv.

time. When Muratori lived at Modena, as librarian to the Duke, he had a custom of distributing alms every day at twelve o'clock to the poor of his quarter. During the hours which he devoted to study, he would receive no visits from any but the poor ; but at whatever hour any of them applied for relief, whether he was at his books or at table, he would instantly rise and give to them. In the severe season he used to provide a stock of beds and warm clothing to distribute among them, and sometimes when he used to find a beggar stiff with cold, and hardly able to support himself he used to have him carried to his house, warmed, placed to eat at his own table, and then sent away with alms. In addition to this ordinary bounty, he established a confraternity in the church of the Pomposa, to provide for the wants of persons who might be forced otherwise to beg, and also to furnish employment to the sons and daughters of the poor ; and to aid this institution he published his *Treatise on Christian Charity*. He gave to it the revenue which he drew from his benefices, and, from the dedication of his works, and, as he wished to transmit to his heirs as an honourable memorial the gold chain which had been presented to him by the Emperor Charles VI., he had it estimated, and a sum equivalent in value given to the fund. This institution supported 200 orphans, widows, and helpless persons, and paid 100 sequins every year to the hospital. Here we should allude also to the charity with which so many learned physicians attended the sick poor, of which the historians of Padua record instances. Bernardine Scardeoneo says, that Jerome Tirabosco Coradino used to visit indigent sick persons for nothing, more willingly than others repair to the rich for money ; to whom refer these words, which are inscribed on his sepulchre in the church of St. John. "In hac urbe morbos summa cum charitate depellens." Similar to him was Jerome Urbino, a man of great piety, without whom it was thought no one in Padua, whether rich or poor, could recover ; — so benign also, and condescending, that not only the citizens, but every sick person among the spiritual poor of Christ, in houses of religion, used to seek his assistance.*

But, leaving these clerks of science and letters, and turning our attention now to the manners of the Lay society, in the middle ages, we shall find that men of secular life had caught the influence of the ecclesiastical

spirit, and were directed in a great measure, as far as relates to the treatment of the poor, in conformity with the rule of religious perfection. King Robert used to nourish, out of his own revenues, 1000 poor persons in eight different cities that he had selected. Whenever he travelled in Lent, he used to feed 100 every day. On Maunday Thursday, at the hour of tierce, he served 300 with his own hands, having one knee on the ground ; to each person he gave vegetables, a fish, bread, and one denarium. At sext he did the same. And after dinner, he laid aside his royal robe, and washed the feet of 160 poor men, giving to each two solidi. Helgald, the Benedictine monk, describes all his charities in detail. On one occasion, returning from a certain monastery, he found that his lance had been gloriously adorned with silver by his wife. After looking at it some time, he began to reflect whether there were not some person who might want the value of it. So, calling a poor man to him, he asked him for an iron instrument, with which he could take off the silver, and when this was brought to him, he closed the doors, and then, with the assistance of the poor man, removed the silver from the lance, and, with his own holy hands, put it into his bag, and charged him as he departed, to take care that no one should discover him. He used to have his palace filled with the holy poor, and they were admitted to feed round his table. He chose, however, twelve poor men, whom he especially loved, whom he had always with him, in honour of the holy Apostles, whom he loved with a devout heart, always preparing for their solemn festivals with a votive fast. These poor men always rode before him wherever he went, and at his death he prayed that their number might never be diminished. The chief care of this man of mercy was thus described : —

"Pascere jejunos, nudos vestire, ligatos
Solvere, discordes conciliare sibi ;
Et quæcumque homines miseri solatia querunt,
Hæc, ut possibile est, promere corde pio."*

Theganus relates of the Emperor Lewis-le-Debonnaire, that he never sat down to table until he had given his daily alms ; and that, whenever he was travelling, he used to entertain the poor when he rested, having at all places where he stopped, a xenodochia ready prepared.†

* Epit. vit. Rob. ap. Duchesne Hist. Franc. Script. tom. iv.

† Duchesne, tom. ii. p. 135.

* De Antiq. Patavii, Lib. xi. 9.

St. Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, was not surpassed even by the holy Bishop St. Aidan in deeds of mercy. On one Easter festival, both bishop and king being seated at table, there arrived a multitude of poor from other parts; the King ordered not only the yet untasted viands, but a silver dish then before him to be broken to pieces, and the fragments to be distributed among them. Petrus Alphonsus says that a certain well educated youth, son of a wise minister of state, to whom a king had promised, on his father's death, the same dignity, gave away all his paternal property to the poor, meditating on the vanity of the world, and the mercy of God; and, being accused to the king as a dissipator of his father's goods, he replied, that he had not dissipated, but congregated them, and placed them beyond the reach of thieves and corruption. At which answer the king was so pleased, that he made him his privy counsellor in place of his father. St. Boniface, when a lad, used to be flogged by his mother for giving away his clothes, even his shirt, to the poor.

One of the first traits recorded of Roger, king of Sicily, is his love in boyhood for giving alms, and when he had nothing to give the poor, his custom of running to his mother Adalesia to beg that she would give him something for them.*

Hear now the monk of Monte Cassino describe the boyhood and youth of the great Abbot Desiderius, who became sovereign Pontiff, under the name of Victor:—"He was of very gentle blood, and his father was Count of Beneventum, and he was always trained up by gentlemen, and instructed in good customs. After his father's death, he used to take what his mother had, and give it continually to the poor; and with his precious clothes he used to cover the poor. And when his mother saw such subtraction of her riches, not to prevent him from doing his will and pleasure, she used to let him do what he wished, for she loved him with great love, as well she might love such a holy, and beautiful, and gentle youth, and her only son."† A great almoner, says Christine de Pisan, was King Charles V., as may be witnessed in his many foundations of churches and colleges; he gave to poor abbeys and priories, and to churches; he restored hospitals with great alms; he gave to the mendicant friars, and to poor scholars, whom he comforted and supported till they

could have a degree; and whenever he heard of any one grown old or distressed, whether poor religious persons or others, or of any poor maidens that had no portion, or poor orphans or widows, or persons in any piteous case whatever, he gave of his own largely; and every day continually with his own hand, humbly and devoutly he used to give a certain sum of money to a number of poor people, and he used to kiss the hand of each of them."*

The Archduke Leopold, and his father the Emperor Ferdinand II., were often heard to declare that if all their treasury were to be exhausted, they would give their habits to the poor, as St. Leopold is known to have done.† I find these lines on the tomb of Lewis VII., king of France:—

"Pauperis ut memores, melius sint pauperiores,
Gaudere pauper homo pauperiore demo."‡

The kings of France used even to claim, as belonging to their dignity, the title of "Chief Administrators of the Goods of the Poor," as may be witnessed in the Royal Letters of the 26th of February, 1475, relative to the Hospital of Bourdeaux, an office, which, in the time of such princes as Lewis-le-Debonnaire, Robert St. Lewis, and Charles V., might have been fairly granted to kings, without an injustice, or exposing the interests of the poor to danger. The ancient capitularies attest, that the kings of France of the first two races, consecrated the largest part of their treasury every year to the assistance of the indigent.§

In later times one may conceive what an immense advantage it was for the poor to have frequently one of themselves in the person of some holy friar, loving poverty and the poor, at the court and in the very council of the monarch, as his confessor. In ages of faith those who wore rough raiment were in kings' houses. Such was John of St. Thomas, the Dominican, confessor of King Philip the IV. of Spain, who was always seen attending to the interests of the poor, whenever it was a question of levying supplies, receiving and presenting their petitions, becoming their advocate on every occasion, and then visiting them in sickness or in prison. And how zealously did many princes correspond to the counsels which such men gave!

A certain ambassador at the table of Amedæus, duke of Savoy, making inquiries

* Livre des Fais du sage Roy, chap. xxxii.

† Avancin, les Vertus Heroiques de Leopold, &c.

‡ Ap. Duchesne, tom. iv.

§ S. Victor, Tableau de Paris, vol. i. p. 58

* Alexand. Abbat. de Rebus gestis Rogerii, apud Murat. Rer. Italic. Script., tom. v.

† L'Ystoire de li Normant, Lib. iii. c. 49.

respecting sporting dogs, the duke told him that he should see his kennel the following day. Having arrived at the appointed hour, the duke led him into a large hall, containing many long tables, at which a crowd of poor persons were dining. "These are my sporting dogs," said the duke; "with these I go on the chase of heaven." "But how many idle, useless persons are among them?" replied the stranger. To whom the prince answered, "It is not my business to scrutinize their breasts. If God should examine me and you minutely, where should we stand? I must regard the poor as a father—not as a judge."

Nor were the nobles generally backward in the same track, though history has to record so many of their names among the number of the oppressors. Innumerable examples were found amongst them of that wise folly which from the sycamore the publican gathered as the fruit of life. It is usual, with many writers, to designate the barbarians who established themselves in the Roman empire as having been but partially converted to Christianity; but the missionaries appeared to have impressed them, at all events, with a due sense of the great commandments of the new law. During the famine which ensued after the wars of succession between the children of Gondioch, king of Burgundy, we read of Erdicie, a prince of the country, who, in the year 472, sent his men with horses and chariots throughout the whole kingdom of Burgundy, to seek the indigent and sick poor, and had them all brought to his castles and houses, which he filled with them; and when the famine was at an end, he placed them again on the waggons; and each person was conducted to the place from which he had been taken.*

Such effect had the exhortations to almsgiving of St. Elphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the rich of that time, that they eagerly sought for objects of its exercise, and we are told left not a man throughout the province subject to want—a sentence which one might deem sufficient to startle the men of Kent at the present day,—at least to render their eloquence more guarded when next they meet together, to take counsel against the pope on Penenden Heath. Things are certainly much changed since the thirteenth century in England, when men could think of leaving no poor person throughout a whole district without a donation. Sir William Vavasour, of Haslewood,

* Paradin, Hist. de Lyon, Lib. ii. c. 3.

who leaves his best horse, with the arms befitting a knight, for his mortuary to the chapel of St. Leonard, bequeathed also one penny to every poor person of the district; adding, that the sum total specified shall be "more if need be." The type of rich and honourable men, in ages of faith, was very different from what it is at present. It may be seen, in the character ascribed by the monk of Monte Cassino to Richard, prince of Capua—the richest of the rich, the humblest of the humble, the bravest of the brave;* or in that of Robert Guiscard—adorned with the dignity of all virtue—so humble, that amongst his people he appeared not as the seignor, but as one of the knights, from whom there was no poor widow woman or little boy who might not ask advice, and to whom they might relate all their thoughts and poverty; who justly judged all that was brought before him, exercising along with justice forgiveness and pity, well observing the words, "Tant seras plus grant, tant plus te humilieras à touz."†

Guido, son of Gaymere, and brother of the ferocious Gisolfe, furnishes another example. "Devout he was to the church," we read, "and continually befriending the poor and giving them alms—honourable knight, and the bravest of the Longobards; of whom the Normans always said, that amongst that race no one was more precious than he."‡

It was the custom of the rich, in early ages, to give the tenth of their goods expressly to the poor.§ And this practice was by no means confined to the great, for we find many instances of its observance in the middle and lower ranks, comprising the tradesman and the labourer. St. William of Rochester, who was a baker, is expressly recorded to have always given to the poor the tenth loaf of his workmanship. In Burgundy, the growers of vines had the holy custom of giving, from time to time, some portion of their best wine to the poor, in order to obtain the blessing of Heaven upon their vineyards.||

A writer of the thirteenth century speaks of a certain shoemaker who used to bring whatever remained of his profit, after providing for his food and clothing, every Saturday, to St. Peter's Church at Rome, and give it there to the poor.¶

During three centuries no one carried a

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. iv. c. 17.

† Id. liv. v. c. 1.

‡ Id. liv. viii. c. 2.

§ Germania Sacra, tom. i. 78.

|| Monteil, Hist. des François, tom. iii. 26.

¶ Vin. Bellov. Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. p. x.

sword in time of peace; but the sign of nobility was a long purse hanging from the belt, for containing alms; and the glory of arms yielded to the renown of mercy to the poor; so that Roger, youngest son of Tancred de Hauteville, and one of the bravest knights of the world, derived his surname from his liberality rather than from any other virtue, being styled, "Roger of the purse," because he always had it in his hand, dispensing bounty. In fact, men boasted of the great charities of their ancestors as they would in these days of their exploits on the field of battle, or of their rhetorical triumphs in the senate. The noble Roman family of the Frangipani derives its name from the great charities of one of its ancestors, in feeding the poor of Rome, as Philip Villani mentions in his life of Dante.

The Badoarian family at Venice, which had erected the church of St. John the Evangelist, in the year 790, when raising a tomb within it, in the sixteenth century, to Angelo Badoario, deemed it the highest eulogium, when it was made, to testify that he ruled the hospital of the poor with singular charity; and again, when an inscription was to be placed upon the sepulchre of the great admiral Andro Badoario, these noble men were content to say of him, "*Quicum honores omnes esset consecutus, pietatem in pauperes unam coluit.*"* No blazon was deemed more noble on a monument than the lines which commemorated the almsgiving fervour of the dead: as those over the grave of Martial d'Auvergne, which record that he was the counsellor and nourisher of the poor, and that he patiently rendered up his spirit to Christ;† and those on the tomb of the third Grimoald, duke of Beneventum, which is placed near the sepulchre of his father Arichis, in that basilica, and which end thus:—

"*Terrenas gazas nunquam servavit amando,
Sed mox captivis, indigenisque dedit.
Itala, Romana, Illyrica, Hebræa, Afra, Pelasga,
Morte tua, Princeps, jam sine fine dolent.*"‡

Ah, reader! there is much profit from these tombs. Mark that of Sebastian Ziani, duke of Venice, in the Benedictine Church of St. George, on which you read, "*Patriæ lux, spes miserorum MCXXVIII.*;" that of John Lando, the senator, in the Church of St. Antonio, with the words, "*Ex opibus suis nihil sibi præter jus largiendi indulsit;*"

* Splend. Venet. in Thess. Ant. Italicæ, v.

† Gouget, Bibliothèque Française, tom. x. 40.

‡ Italia Sacra, tom. viii. 38.

that of Duke Nicholas Marcello, the just and pacific, in the Church of St. Marina, with those, "*In pauperes piissimus;*" that so mouldering with age in the Church of St. Mary of Mercy, of James Morus, a Venetian warrior, with the line,

"*Prodiga pauperibus Christimanus extitit ejus.*"*

that of Raimund Solimano, an illustrious citizen of Padua, erected with such magnificence in the fourteenth century in the Church of the Hermits in that city, on which you read, "*Pauperiem miserans.*"†

In the baronial court, as well as in the yard of every obscure citizen, there was always a distribution of food to the poor, after the family had dined. Giraldus ascribes this custom even to the degenerate Welsh: he says, that "when they ate the first slice of bread was always given to the poor."‡ The remains of every dish that had been touched at the table of Charles the Bold belonged to the poor.§ Owing to the preaching of Eustache de Flay, the pope's legate in the thirteenth century, there was at all great tables in England an eleemosynary dish to receive part of the victuals which they offered to the poor.||

Incidental notice of these customs occurs in the life of St. Francis of Assisium; for the holy father, being invited to dine with Matthew Rimido, a Roman gentleman, and arriving before the master had entered, the holy father being unknown to the servants, who happened to be but recently hired, we read that he sat down in the court among some poor people, and began to eat with them of the alms given; and the master arriving, and finding his guest so placed, seated himself down also on the ground, and made his dinner thus in common with them all.¶

St. Peter Damian, in his treatise on alms dedicated to Mainard, bishop of Urbinum, relates that the marquis Mainfred, in the farthest bounds of Liguria, on Easter Sunday, prepared a magnificent banquet, and having placed the poor in order at many tables, he himself, with his servants, waited on them, and then partook of what they had left.**

* Splend. Ven. in Thess. Ant. Ital. v.

† Bern. Scard. de Ant. Pat. iii. 13.

‡ Girald. Cambrensis. Itin. Cambrie.

§ Lamarche, *État de la Maison du Duc de Bourgogne.*

|| Buleus, *Hist. Universit. Paris*, tom. iii. 7.

¶ Marco Diego de Navarre Sola, *les Chroniques des Mineurs*, Lib. i. c. 118.

** Annul. Camaldul. Lib. xviii.

In the middle ages, when men made a feast, they invited the poor. The monk of Monte Cassino, in his history of the Normans in Italy, after relating the departure of Count Drogo from the pope, and his coming to a castle called Monte Alegro, on the feast of St. Lawrence in the year 1051, proceeds as follows :—" He was accustomed to go to the office on solemn festivals, and to adorn the church, and to invite the poor to dinner, and to make offerings to the poor; and on this occasion Drogo wished to be here, to his delectation, and to celebrate this day with solemnity in honour of St. Lawrence, martyr; and all things necessary for the poor were arranged, and they were invited."* This mode of having delectation in the eleventh century, is worthy of being remarked.

In the year 1588, Camillus Gonzaga, a man no less illustrious for his alms than for his noble blood, used to feed every day, during the scarcity, in his house, at Novelara, in the Venetian territory, two hundred poor persons, on whom he waited himself; while they were not only fed, but instructed in the Christian doctrine. In 1590 his bounty was even greater, to meet the difficulties of the time; and it is said that his sweet and affable conversation delighted his poor guests, with whom he used to dine as only one of their company.

Lo! there stands the castle of Loretto, inhabited by Landulph, count of Aquinum, seigneur of Loretto and of Belicastro. The gate is besieged by a crowd of poor persons, for the scarcity which prevails this year has occasioned great and general distress. But who is this boy, with the face of an angel, that seems about ten years of age, who is distributing alms among them, and speaking to them with such an expression of love? It is the count's son, Thomas, lately returned from school at Monte Cassino, a truly angelic lad, and so devoted to the poor that he gives them part of his own dinner; and it is said the steward has caught him some times taking things without permission to give to them, though when they searched within his clothes they could only find some flowers.† In a chapel at Belicastro, in Calabria, there is a very ancient picture, in which St. Thomas is represented as a boy opening his vest and producing some roses, which had been concealed within it, to a man who seems to interrogate him.‡

St. Ambrose of Sienna, of the illustrious family of Sansedoni, when a youth, used to go out in search of poor people through the streets of that city, not thinking it enough to satisfy those who presented themselves at his father's gate. By consent of his pious mother, Justina, he turned part of the house into a kind of hospice, and had permission, on certain days every week, to receive and entertain all poor passengers, on whom he used to wait, serving them at table, persuaded that he was entertaining Christ.* This was at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Clement VIII., Benedict XIII., and many other sovereign pontiffs, used on certain days to cause poor persons to be entertained in their own palace, and would wait on them at table. It was a custom that prevailed very widely, to keep a kind of host's table for poor strangers, which was in the very hall where the family of the house dined. St. Gregory of Tours mentions a certain gentleman who would never sit down at table with his wife and children, unless there was some poor man to eat with them; and he describes him, on one occasion, when he could find no beggar in the streets, as going outside the town in the evening, to look from the gate whether he could discern any poor stranger, that he might lead him to his house to supper. Even the dark mysterious men whom history as well as poetry represents as appearing from time to time among the feudal nobility, were not exempt from the influence of the general habits of mercy to the poor. The chief of Lara's wide domain is an instance;

"For though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsooth'd withdrew,

For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof."

Although instances of individual bounty might be multiplied without end, for the innumerable friends of God in different ages, dissimilar in many respects, were all of the same disposition in regard to alms—so that, whenever an occasion of showing mercy occurred, they all resembled each other, and gave convincing proof that one was their common Father—yet I cannot refrain from adding, in this place, a few remarkable ex-

* *L'Ystoire de li Normant*, liv. iii. c. 22.

† *Touron, Vie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*, 17.

‡ *Gabr. Barii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriae*, lib. iv.

* *Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i. Lib. 5.

amples. Many authors have written histories of alms, as did Valentinus, Leuchtius, and Drexelius. I shall merely produce a few anecdotes relating to them, such as appeared to me most striking in the perusal of our ancient chronicles.

The alms of the rich, in the middle ages, often surpassed the expectations of the poor. "A certain count," says a writer of the thirteenth century, "saw a poor boy half naked asking alms, and gave him a denarium, desiring him to buy a purse with it, and bring it to him, and adding, that he would then put in it what he thought necessary. The boy went, and wishing to save a little, kept back one obol, and with the other bought a purse and came back to the count, who asked him how much he had paid for it; and when the boy disdained to tell a lie, and said, 'One obol, and I bring you back the other,' the count filled the purse with money, saying, 'If you had brought back a larger purse, young man, you would have gone away with more money.'" But another anecdote from the same author is still more beautiful: "A certain man, through infirmity, not being able to fast till a late hour, caused some poor persons to breakfast with him on fasting days, saying in his prayer, 'O Lord, if thou art angry with me for not fasting to-day, I will say to thee hereafter, before thy judgment-seat, Lord, if I did eat before the time, thou didst eat with me!'"*

Thibaud the Great, count of Blois, and fourth of that name, also called the saint, whose religious foundations and presents to churches were so numerous, gave proof of the utmost charity and mercy for the poor. Thomas de Cantimpré relates, that one day he gave every thing he had, even to his coat and cloak, in alms; and St. Bernard relates, that during a famine he pledged all that he possessed to assist poor families, not sparing even a certain precious vase, when he had nothing else left.†

Behold Charles of Blois, living as an equal with nobility, and as a brother with the poor!—equitable and disinterested in his judgments, pious and austere as a monk. His table was frugal, and his repasts were accompanied with holy lessons. He gave even his needful to the indigent; eighty poor persons were always at his table; and on Holy Thursday sat thirteen, on whom he waited with his own hands, and washed their feet.‡ Richard II., duke of Nor-

mandy, who built the rich and renowned abbey of Fescamp, caused a stone coffin to be made for himself, in which he was to be buried; and this he used to fill with provisions for the poor every Friday, as long as he lived, to which he added twenty sous of silver.* The wife of Count Egbert, at the court of Charlemagne, in like manner, caused her coffin to be made many years before her death, which was twice each day filled with provisions that were given to the poor.†

Memorable was the habitual bounty of Fulco, the good count of Anjou; but one act of charity and humility, above all, rendered him celebrated in the middle ages. It was his custom never to disdain any one, however abject. He used to ask each poor man, with the liberal benevolence of humility, respecting his name and country, and circumstances. After relieving many poor, he would only desire them to go to the monastery of St. Martin at Tours, and pray for themselves. Once, as he was journeying through his domains for the purpose of maintaining peace and justice, surrounded by a crowd of nobles, upon coming within view of the church of the blessed Martin the confessor, according to his custom he dismounted from his horse, and, with knees upon the bare ground, prayed for some time. The attendants, out of respect to the count, stood aside. As he rose from prayer he saw on his right hand a man of the most horrible aspect, with hands and feet all corroded, covered with elephantine pustules, and miserably diseased with leprosy, who asked the count to have pity on him. The rest of the nobles and the domestics of the count feared to approach or even to look at him; the count of a sounder mind, put forth his hand to the bier, intending to give him something; but the leper cried out, "No, my Lord, I do not mean such indulgence; but because my feet are eaten away with leprosy, and I cannot either walk myself or hold myself on a horse to be carried to the church of the confessor, perchance you could carry me thither; and there I should find some man of God, who, for the redemption of his sins, would order for me what was necessary in the hospital of lepers, where I might be received." The count no sooner heard him, than he carefully wrapped the leper round in his own mantle, and, to the

* Speculum Mor. Lib. iii. p. x. 22.

† Bernier, Hist. de Blois, 296.

‡ Lobineau, Hist. de Brit. liv. vii.

* Duchesne, Antiquitez des Villes de France, tom. ii. 382.

† Drexelius de Eleemos. p. ii. c. 4.

astonishment of the beholders, placed him on his shoulders, and bore that burden for two leagues, till he came to the church of the blessed Martin; and then it is said that the leper disappeared, and the count understood the mystery, but kept silence, and allowed the rest to remain in ignorance of it. He had carried this burden from the gate of Evrerdon to the porch of the blessed Martin.

The young son of the Count of Ebernstein, who became the second general of the Dominican order, under the name of Blessed Jordan of Saxony, had a custom of giving alms every day to the first beggar who presented himself. Having been sent to Paris to pursue his studies, he was so enamoured with the ecclesiastical offices, that he never failed to repair by night to the church of our Lady, to assist at matins; and if he arrived before the porter had opened the gates, he used to meditate before them, undismayed by the horror of the darkness. One night, as he was running for this purpose, and fearing that he should not arrive in time to hear the beginning of matins, a stranger accosted him and asked charity. Having no money, he took off his belt and gave it to him; and we are told, that when he entered the church and knelt before the image of our Saviour, he felt how greatly that act of mercy was agreeable to God.*

St. Dominick, when a student at Palencia, having given every thing else that he possessed to the poor in a year of famine, sold even his books that had been glossed, as an ancient writer says, with his own hand, in order that the price might be employed in relieving them. It is said, that this holy youth had been always particularly encouraged to give great alms, by his noble mother. In the old History of Du Guesclin we read that while a youth in his father's house, where, on all other accounts he was but little regarded, he had a custom, that if any poor person asked alms, and he had no money, he would undress himself, and give his clothes, for the love of our Lord; which trait pleased his father far more than any thing else which was in him†—remarkable testimony assuredly to the character of that father, or rather to the spirit of that age, which could recognise and admire the pious love of our Lord in such an act of a truant lad, who was generally accused of forgetting his

rank, and conducting himself like the son of a peasant. This love, prompting acts of heroic generosity to the poor, was even a feature of the chivalrous character, as not only the ancient romances which represent its manners, but many of the monastic records, which speak of the early lives of convertites, can attest. Garnier de Mont-morillon, a monk of Maison-Dieu, had been once a distinguished knight in the world. One day, as he returned from a pilgrimage to St. James, riding alone with his squire, he met a beggar at the skirts of a forest, and, not having any money to give to this man, who asked alms, he devoutly offered him a pair of precious gloves, which had been given to him by his lady love. This act remained unknown, until at length he himself related simply to some persons how, for the love of Christ, he had once made such an offering to a poor beggar.* The charity of feudal lords did not, however, disdain to flow in a more ordinary channel.

Matthew de Montmorenci, in the year 1302, during the fair of the Landit, destined a certain rent for purchasing clothes and shoes for the poor of Montmorenci, which were distributed by a canon, by the curate, and by one of the townsmen.† In the year 1205, Matthew de Montmorenci assigned, on his estate of Ecouen, many sums to be given to the poor, and also to monks, ordaining that every year a certain quantity of corn should be applied to making bread, which was to be distributed to the poor every day in Lent, by the canons of the collegiate Church of St. Martin at Montmorenci.‡ In 1588, Abel de la Rochette, Seigneur de Cervon, and his wife Margueritte de Lyonne, made a foundation in the village for supporting a schoolmaster, for marrying every year a certain number of poor maidens, and for clothing yearly six poor persons.§

The love which many of the great Seignurs of the middle ages evinced for the poor, is certainly not one of the least remarkable features in their history. How forcibly is this indicated in one expression of a letter, written by Father John de Avila, to John of God, of Grenada, where he says, "I thought the duke of Sese had sent you a present. If he do not, remember to ask him; and he will send you

* Tournon, Vie de S. Dom. Lib. vi.
† Chronique du Guesclin, 40.

* Orderic Vital. Hist. Norman. Lib. viii.
† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. iii. 385.
‡ Id. tom. iv. 293.
§ Id. tom. xiii. 79.

something; for he loves you greatly, from knowing that you devote yourself to comfort the poor.* The charity and alms of the good Cleberge, at Lyons, during the famine in 1531, render him an historic personage. How admirable was the charity, how prodigious was the alms of the noble and rich Florentines, during the great dearth of 1346 and 1347. Again, in 1496, when famine was added to the political misfortunes which harassed both the city and territory of Florence, how merciful was that conduct of the inhabitants, in not allowing that the entrance into the city should be denied to the wretched, so that great crowds of poor people from a distance wandered about the streets receiving copious alms from the noble and wealthy citizens?

Angelo Acciajoli, Bishop of Florence, and the magistrates of the city, rivalled each other on that occasion in works of mercy. All who fled thither were graciously received, without distinction of friend or enemy, lodged and nourished as long as the famine lasted. Troops of poor arrived daily at the gates, and the citizens never grew weary in giving them all the same reception.† Similar effects followed after the preaching of Savonarola in that city. The rich rivalled one another in liberality to the poor. At the end of each sermon, ladies of quality used to give up their rings, their necklaces, parts of their dress, or most precious jewels, to the persons who collected. John Picus, of Mirandola, by advice of Savonarola, having sold his estates, set aside two thousand gold crowns to give in charity to the poor. In vain he besought the friar who had given him the counsel to accept at least four hundred crowns, to form a dower for his two sisters, who, in consequence of the disordered state of their father's affairs, were reduced almost to the necessity of seeking their bread. The ministers of mercy in the ages of faith were not hypocrites. The friar would not permit them to receive one shilling.‡

The magnificence of Cosmo de' Medici was universally celebrated, but the full extent and number of his charitable deeds were not known till after his death, when his son, making the inventory of his property, found that there was hardly a citizen of any quality who did not owe him large sums. He used to anticipate their demand,

and provide for all their wants. Marsilius Ficinus declares, that he has been moved even to tears at hearing of the prodigious alms and charity of Lorenzo de' Medici, during the late holy festivals of the Church. "If it be effeminate to shed tears, Michelecti, I confess myself to be effeminate. Such is my disposition, whether through a certain tender joy, or through I know not what strange affection, I weep as often as I consider how pious is our Lorenzo, how merciful to the poor, how beneficent to all men. While he wipes away tears from other eyes, he causes, by some marvellous fascination, mine to flow over."*

During a scarcity, when the poor of Rimini, and of the villages around, lay languishing in great distress, brother Francis, a Capuchin friar, went about carrying a large cross on his shoulders, and crying, "O citizens, help Christ, who is famishing." In this manner he collected such a quantity of corn and beans, that he could thenceforth nourish all the poor, to whom, under a certain portico of the city, he daily distributed food with his own hands; and as the supply exceeded the demand, a pious farmer gave part of a field, that the remainder of the beans might be sown in it for the use of the poor, which produced a most abundant harvest.†

In 1577, when a great sickness was prevalent at Verona, for which the physicians prescribed the use of old wine, there was scarcely any one in the city who could furnish it but a nobleman of the family of Vilmercati, and though the almoner of the Capuchins felt shame on being obliged to apply so often for a supply, that gentleman would never allow his servants to refuse giving it; so that a report went through all Verona, that his casks had become inexhaustible.‡

So much was seen in the last book respecting the charitable works of the devout female sex in ages of faith, that we need hardly seek farther illustrations of such mercy, though it may be well to remark, in a few instances, the holy and benevolent idea which inspired it, as well as the ingenious and affectionate manner in which it was reduced to practice. Indeed the rule was the same for all. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; "that is to say," adds Guy de Roye, "thou shalt

* De Avila, Epist. xvii.

† Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

‡ Idem. tom. iii. 23.

* Mars. Ficinus, Epist. Lib. i.

† Annales Capucinatorum, an. 1599.

‡ Id. an. 1577.

love and desire that he should love and serve God, and do good works, and arrive at Paradise, as thou wishest for thyself :^{*} and there was no provision in the middle ages to check the alms of a Ruberto of Padua, who when canon of that cathedral, used every morning to give a piece of silver to each poor mendicant that he found in the cathedral when he first entered it : † an example showing a type which had many imitators amongst both men and women, although the mercy of the latter does seem to have been more avowedly in all instances directed by this supernatural motive : so that it is peculiarly well expressed in that symbolic image of a young widow holding in one hand the model of a church, and with the other giving alms to a poor cripple, which, under the name of St. Elizabeth, stands against a pillar in the beautiful church, under her invocation, at Marbourg. Some anxiety to promote the spiritual welfare of the poor, was generally at the bottom in all their deeds of mercy ; as when Madame de Chantal visits an unhappy victim of vice, tends her through a long sickness, and at length succeeds in effecting the cure of her soul, while she only seemed occupied in administering relief to the body. To honour God in his saints was another object generally associated with their benevolence to the poor. At Lisbon, on St. Anthony's day, an English traveller describes his meeting the Prior of Avis, a most benign prelate, who has been passing it in consoling the sick and indigent, climbing up to their miserable chambers to afford assistance in the name of the saint whose festival was celebrating, and whose fame for every charitable act has been handed down by the inhabitants of that city from father to child, through a long series of generations. It was with the alms of devout women, given with similar intentions, that such visitors were often provided. Some view to facilitate the attendance of the poor at the divine offices, or to render them sensible of the connection between the bounty which relieved them, and the love of Jesus Christ, was sure to be discernible in the mode of dispensation. The holy seasons of the Church were therefore those on which their alms were chiefly distributed. The days which are selected by princes and nobles of the reformed creed to throw open their brilliant

palaces to the rich, and to furnish forth their tables with the most sumptuous fare, were those on which the Catholic nobility sat by the side of beggars, hearing the preacher, who explained the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis, left seventy acres of land in the parish of Louvre, near Paris, to furnish bread, which was to be given to all poor persons who should apply for it on the day of Midlent.*

These alms of Lent were always accompanied with an intimation that they were given through devotion for that holy season, as may be witnessed in the letter of her son concerning them. † The mode in which women dispensed charity to the poor in the middle ages, furnishes a striking example of what we remarked in the beginning, respecting the recognised incompatibility between the manners of a dissipated and irreligious life, with the grace of the blessed merciful ; for their generosity is always shown as the result of deep religious impressions, and generally in connection with personal abnegation and austerity. The duchess, say the old writers of the life of St. Elizabeth, would often command for herself a dinner such as that of the poor, in order that she might know by experience what kind of food they partook of. The castle of Bouchet belonged at one time to the Lady Anne Martinozzi, sister of Cardinal Mazarine, Princess of Conty, whose epitaph in the church of St. Andre des Arcs, at Paris, attested that, disgusted with the world at the age of nineteen years, she sold her jewels to nourish the poor of Berry, Champagne, and Picardy, during the famine of 1662, remaining a widow at the age of twenty-nine. ‡

In the thirteenth century, Hedwige, Princess of Poland, used to nourish daily thirteen beggars, as if Christ and his Apostles, and wherever she travelled she took them along with her ; but for other poor she had a separate kitchen, and servants apart to wait on them. § No mother ever showed greater love to her own children, than was evinced for the poor by Leonora of Austria, sister of the Emperor Rodolph II. She used to give them the gems from her robes, and to prepare the food for them with her own hands. She often rose secretly in the dead of the night,

* Guy de Roys le Doctrinal de Sapience.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patav. Lib. ii. 6.

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. v. 476.

† Ap. Duchesne, tom. v.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xi. 67.

§ Drexelius de Eleemos. p. ii. c. 4.

to visit the sick, and sometimes remained with them during three or four entire days. The only complaint that she ever uttered, when unable to leave her apartment through illness, was, that she could not visit the poor. Catherine Ciboia, Duchess of Camerino, nearly related to three sovereign pontiffs, a woman no less distinguished by piety and greatness of mind, than by learning, having a perfect knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and being skilled in theology, philosophy, and nearly all arts, is commemorated in the annals of the Capuchins, whom she loved and protected from their commencement, as being still more illustrious, on account of her eminent disposition to exercise mercy. Her house was always filled with a crowd of indigent persons; and no one ever departed from her gate empty handed or sorrowful. But above all works of love, we are told that she preferred those which tended to promote the salvation of others.*

The details respecting the alms of devout women, which occur in all representations of the ancient feudal life, show not only the fervour which inspired them in relieving the poor, but the prodigies of good which they effected. During a year of scarcity Madame de Chantal, the blessed foundress of the order of the Visitation, nourished not only all the poor on the baron's estates, but also those of the surrounding country for seven leagues round; and though some persons used to come occasionally twice in the day, she would never refuse them.† The common saying on the tongue of all the poor in Poland used to be, that there would be no poor in that kingdom if the blessed Grimislava, mother of King Boleslaus the Chaste, had been still alive.‡ St. Vincent de Paul was enabled to perform his great works of charity by means of devout women of the first rank, such as the Duchess d'Aiguillon, the Princess of Mantua, afterwards Queen of Poland, the Marchioness of Magnelais, and others. When the lady of the manor was dying, the poor of the surrounding country used often to demand and obtain permission to approach her bed-side, as we read of the lady of Chevreux d'Esturville.§ What an affecting picture might be placed upon

this tomb, which opens to receive the Queen of Naples. On one side you might see an altar, from which a priest is turning, as if having celebrated the holy mass; and fronting it, on the other, a bed, on which the young queen is represented in the act of giving a book to one in kingly guise, who receives it on his knees. There need be added no inscription; tradition would supply the comment, and record, that in that book were written the names of all the indigent families who had long been receiving her secret alms, without knowing from whose mercy the relief had come.

Madame de Pollalion, we read, when a child in her parents' house, being under the direction of father Lebrun, a Dominican friar, had no greater pleasure than in comforting and assisting the poor. She used to give them her pocket-money, and even what was given for her own dinner. On one occasion, having found a poor sick child, she begged permission to have him taken care of in her father's house, and then attended him like a little sister till he died.*

We have already seen that these Catholic ladies used to visit the cottages of the peasants, and teach them how to assist the sick, and give them clothes, and tend them in their illness, and serve them on their knees. Many interesting and highly poetic scenes resulted from the charitable works of women in the middle ages, which even profane history does not disdain to exhibit. O how did the burning words of Christ dissolve the hearts of those, who in the gentleness of their sweet youth had never trodden on a worm, or bruised a living flower, but they had pitied it with needless tears! Madame de Chantal meeting three poor young men in great distress, and having no money, gave them her diamond ring off her finger, though it had belonged to her revered husband; and it is said, that she felt such joy at making this sacrifice, that she resolved from that hour never to refuse any person who asked alms for the love of God.

On a certain Thursday, say the ancient chronicles of St. Elizabeth, the duchess was descending from the castle of Wartbourg into the town, richly attired, and having given all her silver to a crowd of poor persons, when her charity was again invoked, having no money left, she took one of her gloves, which was adorned with

* Annales Capucinarum, an. 1528.

† Marsollier, Vie de Mde. de Chantal. i. 55.

‡ Wadd. ann. Minorum, tom. iv. 1258.

§ Vie de Elizabeth Rauquet, dame d'Esturville, Paris, 1660.

* Vie de Madame de Pollalion, Paris, 1754.

jewels, and gave it to the beggar. A young knight who was in her train, observing what she had done, went back and purchased the glove from the beggar, which he fastened to his helmet as a pledge of divine protection. Subsequently, he assisted at many tournaments, and went to join the crusaders. On returning home, and on his death-bed, he declared that he had always ascribed his escapes to having worn that memorial of the dear St. Elizabeth.*

Indeed the magnificence of alms was a point on which we should have dwelt. Berta, wife of the emperor Henry IV., having been presented with a skein of very fine thread by a poor rustic maiden who had spun it, and taken occasion of the emperor's visit to Padua to send it to her, and hearing that for holy manners she was a model to the whole village of Montagnono, where she resided, gave the thread to her steward, and ordered him to repair to that village, and to give her as many acres from the land of the state as could be comprised by the thread. To this donation the noble family of Montagnono traced the origin of its greatness.†

But it would be endless to multiply these instances. It may only be remarked, in concluding, that it was not so much by what Catholic women performed themselves, however great their services may have been, as by what they disposed others to perform, that they contributed to the reign of mercy upon earth. What was it, in fact, which determined the will of men to take the direction of blessed mercy? Faith and divine grace, undoubtedly, as we observed in the beginning; but it is evident, also, that there were two other powers, distinct, though intimately associated with impulse divine, in constant co-operation, to promote the same effect; namely, the instructions of the clergy, and, under their influence, the angel-like perfection of the woman's heart; for it was the sweet look, or the image raised by memory of the gentle wife or maiden, making all things else beautiful and dear, that killed the fiend within remorseless breasts, and made them pitiful. The virtues of the maiden made other ladies fair, says the poet of the Nibelungen; and he might have added, the beauty of the maiden left in the world none but the virtuous—none who had not, at least in ruins, the elements of an angelic nature—

* Ct. de Montalembert, l'Hist. de S. Eliz. chap. 8.

† Bern. Scardeono de Antiq. Pat. Lib. iii. 15.

none but objects of the deepest, holiest sympathy; for in man communion with this pure being kindled intense zeal to serve and comfort all whose hopes and fears had been studied in one face, that to a youthful mind had always reflected heaven. Ah! what sudden tears and what immense pity would not the thought alone inspire, that she too might have suffered this calamity—that she too might have had her bright innocent fancies thus dissipated! What kind of relief, think you, would be extended to the destitute, while such images passed through the heart? When, as Marsilius Ficinus says, all women under one idea would be one woman? It would be impossible, therefore to understand the manners of Catholic ages, in regard to tenderness and mercy, without taking into account this great, though subordinate motive; to appreciate which, it is necessary to have formed an adequate idea of the graces that encompassed young Catholic women like St. Elizabeth; and there can never be wanting to the Church some that resemble her; so that you perhaps, reader, like myself, have no occasion to recur to books for illustration, when it is a question of the exquisite justice and truly divine compassion of a woman's heart in which youth and faith are joined.

Hitherto we have seen, as it were, shadows of the blessed merciful pass separately, one by one. But it is perhaps from a general view of the manners of a Catholic population, and the spirit of its municipal laws, that we can form the most correct idea of the compassionate principle which predominated in society during the middle ages: though indeed, without pursuing our researches any farther, methinks we must already know how to estimate the merit of those modern writers who would persuade us that the people, then in a state of infancy like children, were cruel and insensible to the sufferings of others. But in the face of such witnesses it will be desirable to present direct proof that the interests of the people were always paramount in the estimation of both magistrates and citizens; while in respect to provision for every description of human misery, their institutions were such as no former legislators could have conceived, and such also as no community in modern times, without the aid of Catholicism, can hope to imitate with the slightest chance of success.

"Greatly have we exulted, on hearing of your faith and constancy," says St. Ber-

nard, writing to the citizens of Toulouse. "Our visit to you was short, but, as it appears, not fruitless. The corruptors of your faith are detected, and your manners are no longer in danger of being contaminated by them; so stand, I beseech you, in the Lord. Practise hospitality, receive the stranger, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, redeem the captives, and prove by your works of mercy that you have profited by our admonitions."* You perceive, reader, with what weapons he had armed them against herey, with what spirit he had inspired a whole city. Of the confraternities, which were one of the immediate results of the direction given to the public mind, I have repeatedly had occasion to speak; and it was not possible to mention them, in reference to any subject, without remarking at the same time their prodigious efforts in administering consolation of every kind to the poor and miserable of every description. At Vicenza there was a confraternity of laics, under the name of St. Jerome, assiduous in pious exercises, while living free in their respective houses. Every week twelve of these men used to go about to visit the sick and prepare them for the sacraments, and comfort them with food and clothing. "There is no merchant," says Ughelli, "citizen or noble, to whom they do not apply, asking alms at every door. Seventy laymen are thus inflamed with the love of God; so that no one in Vicenza need despair of relief."† In the city of Treviso, one of these lay confraternities used every year to enable twenty-five poor maidens to marry.‡

A Parma, in the year 1498, we find mention of a confraternity like that of the Minerva at Rome, which was instituted with a view of enabling poor and virtuous maidens and young men to marry. To this was attached an oratory, which in course of time became a magnificent church, under the title of the Madonna de la Steccata.

Herbordi, a Hungarian Dominican, and bishop of Bergamo, completed, in 1261, the establishment of the society of mercy, which had been commenced by Pinamons de Brembati, a nobleman of that city, the members of which were engaged to provide for the necessities of poor families, and for the education of their children.§

In Catana, De Grossis enumerates

twenty-six pious confraternities of laymen, instituted in order to exercise mercy in various ways to the suffering, all of which had a separate church within the precincts of the city; and their offices are well expressed by many of their titles, as the brethren of St. Mary of Mercy—of St. Mary of Consolations—and the brethren of Peace. Those of St. Euplus bound themselves to perform all the charitable offices that are discharged by the Capuchin friars.*

At Padua, in the sixteenth century, there were twenty-eight spiritual colleges of secular men of all ranks of life, to all of which were annexed vast halls and beautiful chapels, in which sacred ceremonies were religiously performed on stated days. Scardeoneo says, that of these, four are chiefly eminent—those of St. Antony, of St. James, of St. Mary of the Arena, and the School of Charity; the vast revenues of which fraternities, amounting to five thousand gold pieces, are expended religiously by devout laics, in feeding the poor, clothing the indigent, giving marriage portions to maidens, and alms, to poor priests. There is also, he adds, "the chamber of the poor," in the episcopal palace, the funds of which, resulting from fines and contributions of the clergy, have been conducted and dispensed gratuitously and studiously for more than thirty years, by Bartholomew Caligarius.† But the most celebrated of the confraternities of the middle age was that of the brethren of the Misericordia at Florence, which a recent traveller describes as one of the earliest institutions of charity, and perhaps the only national trait of ancient Florence which now remains. "A pure and primitive simplicity," saith he, "marks every feature and act of these brothers, who in silence and in solitude fulfil their sacred and unostentatious offices. The origin of this fraternity is connected with the great plague in 1348. During its continuance a few individuals, firm in purpose and strong in piety, self-devoted, attended on the sick and dying; and the survivors of these chosen few afterwards, taking the monastic habit and order of brethren of Misericordia, assumed for life the performance of these services, which in the hour of sorrow they had voluntarily fulfilled. A black dress, in which the brethren are attired from head to foot, entirely covers

* Epist. ccxlii. + Italia Sacra, tom. v. 1029.

† Id. tom. v. 487.

§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. Lib. 6.

* Catanens. Decachord. ii. 15, in Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiquit. Patavii, Lib. ii. chap. 5.

the person and conceals the face. The brother, whether of noble or of lowly birth, is equally undistinguished and unknown; and their duties are performed, and charities dispensed, to the noble or beggar with the same indiscriminating ceremonies. Six of the brethren watch continually, and medical aid is always in readiness. Mass is said every morning, and vespers are sung in the evening. On the floor are ranged biers, palls, torches, and dresses. They are summoned to their duties by the solemn tolling of their deep-toned bell, which, when heard in the dead and silent hour of the night, falls on the ear with dismal and appalling sound. The sick are taken to the hospitals, the dead are conveyed to their last homes, and the unclaimed brought to their church on a bier covered with a pall.

Cresolius treats on the burial of the dead as amongst the works of the blessed merciful; and we have elsewhere seen with what solemnity this was performed by the early Christians; so that St. Gregory Nyssen compares the long train of lighted tapers at the funeral procession of Meletius to a river of fire.*

"Another office of the brethren of *Misericordia*," continues the same writer, "is to visit the prisons and prepare the condemned to death. In this institution the numbers are unlimited; they are not of necessity individually known to each other, but can render themselves intelligible by certain signs and words in any circumstances requiring communication. Their vows enjoin them to be ready, night or day, at the call of sudden calamity, to attend those overtaken by sickness, accident, or assault. A certain number of them are in rotation employed in asking charity—a service which they are obliged to perform barefooted, and in a silent appeal, the rules strictly forbidding the use of speech when engaged on any duty. This call is never left unanswered, every individual making an offering, were it only of the smallest coin. No fixed period is enjoined for the fulfilment of the vow taken by this order. Many in the highest sphere have sought expiation of sins by assuming it for a longer or shorter time."†

Similar confraternities existed in most cities of Europe. At Evreux, for instance, those brethren who were chiefly employed in burying the dead were bound to assem-

ble in the church of St. James, at the tolling of that bell, and thence proceed, two by two, to carry the body from the house to the grave.

There was a confraternity in the church of Santa Maria de Latina, at Messina, of the date of 1178, consisting of eighty brothers and fifty sisters, who were bound to succour each other, and in case of sickness to administer relief; and each member should have four to watch by him with a lighted lamp, and when dead he should have masses said and alms for his soul.* The fraternity of this kind, at Catania, was called that of St. Ursual, and of Death, or of the Black Brethren.†

The present benefit societies in England are but the offspring of the ancient Catholic guilds, which existed ever since the time of the Saxons. By the rules of one established at Atterbury, the brethren bound themselves to find fifteen men who should bring home any member who should fall sick within sixty miles; and if he should die first, to send thirty men to convey him to the place in which he desired to be buried, attending the corpse in an honourable manner, having masses said, and praying devoutly for his soul.

But it is during an interval of public calamity that we can best discern what were the resources of mercy in Catholic ages; and that we may be able to form this estimate, let us hear Paradin, in his simple but graphic style, describe the charity of the citizens of Lyons in the year 1581, when a famine had desolated that country. It is a passage which furnishes a fine illustration of the remark of St. Augustine: "*Si angustiantur vasa carnis dilatentur spatia charitatis.*"‡ "During this famine," saith he, "every inhabitant of Lyons, poor as well as rich, did more than his duty; and the citizens seemed inspired with a spirit different from what had ever been seen before. You would have seen the poor give to the poor, and as it were take from his own mouth to put into that of another; so that actually more died from eating to excess, than from hunger: for those who had long borne the famine, on coming into the city, devoured too greedily what they received, and died in consequence. The magistrates met at the convent of St. Bonaventura, and decreed that the poor, both without and within the city, should be conducted to four or five great hospitals pro-

* Ap. Cres. Anth. Sac. 585.

† Bell's Observations on Italy.

* Sicilia Sacra, notit. ii. 398.

† Catanens. Decachord.

‡ Serm. x.

vided for them, and that alms should be collected for their support from the devotion of others, who were to be put in mind of what Jesus Christ has recommended to the rich; and for this purpose eight persons were deputed to go about teaching through the city, and saying that to be merciful to the poor was to have pity on oneself, as without charity no one could please God. Great were the alms collected. One good, holy German merchant, who chose that his name should only be written in the book of life, in which the blessed are enregistered, gave five hundred livres; and in three years and a half there were given two thousand three hundred and forty-four livres—a memorable alms. The bishops and abbots would have sold their jewels, and even their chalices, rather than fail the people in this extremity. In fine, the indigence ceased, and the lamentable and lugubrious voice was heard no more. By previous agreement, at the sound of the great bell of the convent of St. Bonaventura, the poor assembled before its gates, to the number of eight thousand persons; and the distribution of bread, soup, and meat, to each one, occupied the persons employed from six in the morning till two in the afternoon. A little wine was added to the strangers, for whom cabins were erected expressly round the abbey of *Æs-nay*; and an altar was constructed, at which mass was said for them daily. There they were nourished, from Friday, the 19th of May, 1531, to Sunday, the 9th of July, when the crops began to be cut. Then alms were given to each, and they were dismissed, to go wherever they chose. The poor sweetly obeyed; and after rendering thanks to God, expressed their gratitude to the magistrates of the city. On the 18th of January it was determined, at a general assembly, in the convent of St. Bonaventura, to perpetuate the divine and holy work of assisting the poor, and that eight of the chief persons of the city should be deputed every year on the feast of St. Thomas, before Christmas, to conduct the distribution of the alms, without having any other salary but what they would receive from God. Hospices were then built, and a mill added, called the mill of alms, on the Rhone, to grind corn for the poor; and every Sunday afternoon the officers were to sit at the convent, to receive the petitions of the poor. The orphan children were there lodged and educated.

All the sick poor, when dismissed from the Hotel Dieu, receive alms to help them on their journey. Every Sunday, in five different places of the city, alms are distributed; and on the vigils of Easter, Christmas, and the Epiphany, the alms are doubled to each. At the convent, a loaf of bread is given to every passenger. Trunks were placed in the churches, before which an orphan sat during the offices to beseech charity; and similarly on the bridge over the Saone boxes were placed, and a rector sat by it to remind the passengers. The almoner of the poor strangers was to see that they passed on after being relieved, unless in case of sickness. The poor of the town were all registered; and if any one were found begging who had been relieved, he was to be confined in prison, on bread and water. The merchant of alms, who had to purchase the corn, wood, and other provisions for the poor, and to render his accounts every month, and to deliver the proper portions to the respective hospitals, and to be present in his office every Sunday, was to have no other wages but the grace of God. Similarly, the bakers and millers were to have no other wages. All the poor, being registered, were required, to be present at the general procession every year, which proceeded in order from the convent of St. Bonaventura. First walked the four criers of the confraternities, sounding bells; then a poor orphan, carrying a wooden crucifix; afterwards the rest of the orphan children, two by two, the boys singing *Fili Dei miserere nobis*, and the orphan maidens singing, *Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis*; then the poor men and women follow, saying their Hours, and praying for their benefactors; after whom walk the four mendicant orders, chaunting the litany, followed by the officers of justice, the counsellors, and sheriffs, and rectors, and finally by those who are induced through devotion to accompany the procession. When they arrive at the archbishop's palace, each of the poor receives, besides their ordinary alms, three pence tournois. At the end, there is a sermon in the church of St. John, where the people are exhorted to persevere in works of charity. Before this institution, the plague had reigned more or less, without any interruption, during fourteen years in Lyons; whereas now it has wholly disappeared.*

* Paradin, *Hist. de Lyons*, Lib. iii. c. 18.

The plague, which so often desolated the cities of Europe in the middle ages, was an occasion to call forth all the energies of the blessed merciful ; and their conduct, under such circumstances, constituted a most remarkable fact in the history of mankind. An early example is furnished in the Roman martyrology, which commemorates the holy priests, deacons, and many others, who in the time of the emperor Valerian, during a most cruel pestilence, willingly offered themselves to death to serve the sick, whom the religious faith of the pious is accustomed to venerate as martyrs :* and the annals of the middle age furnish a series of records, attesting the same devotion whenever there was an opportunity for its exercise. Some of these are in a most especial degree remarkable.

At Avignon, the plague of 1348, which is described by Petrarch, called forth the pastoral solicitude and truly pontifical munificence of Clement VI. It was on this occasion that Sienna owed a debt of eternal gratitude to her archbishop, Michael Tolomei,† whose personal service was unremitting. Then, too, appeared, to assist and console the afflicted people, St. Catherine of Sienna, as an angel of mercy, by whose careful tendence the lives of many persons were preserved ; amongst whom historians mention a certain pious hermit, whom she placed in the hospital of mercy, and two Dominican friars, who had devoted themselves to the service of the sick. St. Bernardine, at that time a secular youth, served them in the hospital of the blessed Virgin. At Florence, the mercy of the citizens in general, who supplied the food, medicines, and service, and whatever could comfort the afflicted, in abundance, was ever memorable. Such an effusion of charity might seem inexplicable, if we were to credit the historians who represent that people in unfavourable colours ; but we are prepared to witness it, from discovering the one fact, that they placed all their confidence in their bishop, Angelo Acciajoli, who in so eminent a degree possessed the spirit of Jesus Christ.‡ During the three years while this fearful Asiatic pestilence lasted, it would be impossible to enumerate all the illustrious members of the different monastic orders who became true martyrs in the exercise of mercy. Simon de Langres, general of the Dominicans, had ordered all the provincials to make

choice, in each house, of the monks who were most qualified to render succour to the sick. When the plague began to ravage the territory of Bologna, the blessed Conradin of Brescia, then superior of the Dominican convent of that city, while taking care to preserve the brethren of his house, spared not his own person, but devoted himself to the service of the sick. When it broke out again after the war, he terminated his course in the exercise of the same charity, in 1429. It was in 1448 when the plague again ravaged the city and territory of Florence, that the zeal and charity of St. Antoninus, the archbishop, extorted the admiration of all men. After setting the example in his own personal service, he procured for his imitators and companions in that work the Dominicans of his convent of St. Mark, those of the convent of Fiesoli, and of Santa Maria Novella ; the greatest part of whom died in the exercise of this heroic mercy to the afflicted people.

In 1538, a pestilence breaking out in Venice, which swept away great numbers, brother Angelo and another Capuchin friar of the province of Bologna, obtained permission from the provincial to repair thither, where they exercised that ministry of mercy during many months, until the disappearance of the contagion. It was said that the Saviour appeared to these friars while they were at prayer, thanked them for their kindness to the sick poor, and desired them to return to their province to receive their reward. They left Venice immediately, repaired to the provincial, received his benediction, and on the fifteenth day after the vision, as it was foretold to them, rendered their souls to Christ.*

During the ravages of the plague in Rome, in 1522, Silvester Mozolini de Prierio, master of the sacred palace, published a treatise, entitled, *On the Care of the Sick and Dying*. To add his example to instruction, he tended many persons ; and it was in the exercise of this mercy that he died. Notwithstanding the malady to which he had fallen a victim, he was buried in the church of the Minerva.† Yves Mayeuc, bishop of Rennes, in the same century, used to go about from one infected house to another, consulting and administering to the sick when the plague raged in that city.‡

Peter Paul was an octogenarian friar, in the convent of Dominicans at St. Maximin in Provence, when a pestilence was

* Sub Die, 28 Feb.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 12.

‡ Id. tom. ii. liv. 13.

* *Annales Capucinarum*, an. 1538.

† Touron, tom. iii. liv. 24. ‡ Id. tom. iv. 25.

raging in the neighbourhood. The village of St. Zacharia had just lost its curate, and the inhabitants were dying in great numbers. This holy man prevailed on the superior to permit him to visit it, on condition of his finding some other priest of the house willing to accompany him, which was instantly fulfilled; but when the two friars were seen proceeding to the gate of the town, the people suspected their intention; and as they ascribed their own exemption from the malady to the presence of that holy man among them, they absolutely refused to let them pass, and they were constrained to abandon their intention.*

In the plague which ravaged Italy in 1628, Mathieu de Bassio and twelve other Capuchins of Camerino applied to Ludovicus, the superior of the convent in that city, for permission to serve the sick. That holy friar addressed them in these words: "Dearest brethren in Christ, there is nothing which more convinces men of the excellence of the Christian religion, than when they see us lay down our lives for them, and hasten to give them succour in their last moments, when destitute of all things else; moreover, by so doing, we are made imitators of Christ, who excites us to mercy, saying, By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. Those who despise death for the salvation of others and the charity of Christ, differ not from those who lay down their lives for the faith. Therefore I am filled with joy on beholding you thus excited to win the crown of martyrdom. Lo! the axe is laid at the root of the tree. Pallida mors æquo pede pulsat pauperum tabernas, regumque tures. But if death should find us intent on these offices of charity, it will only transmit us to the possession of a better life, and of an eternal kingdom." The superior then reminded them of certain rules which, on a similar occasion in 1523, he had found most useful to himself and others; which prescribed that they should cast all thought of their lives on God, and seek nothing but his honour and the spiritual and corporal good of the sufferers, that they should not neglect their own spiritual exercises, that they should be mindful ever of the presence of God, that they should devote part of the night to the divine praises, and each morning, before the rising of the sun, commend their sick to the divine mercy in the sacrifice of the altar, that no friar should go forth alone, and that on no account any trust or deposit or pro-

mise should be accepted from the sick persons or their friends. Then, having received his benediction, these friars repaired in the first instance to the duchess Catherine Ciboia, and acquainted her with their intention; and when that illustrious princess, who had been sunk in consternation at the general calamity, beheld their countenances and heard them speak, she began, we are told, to revive, and seemed to breath again. The effect which their presence and ministry wrought upon the people was truly divine: the city seemed to rise from the grave; the poor were relieved with the abundance of the rich; no sick person was left without attendance and consolation, and the blessed mysteries, no dying man without a friendly hand to close his eyes, no dead body without a minister to wash and adorn it with decency, and commit it to a holy grave. Who could enumerate the conversions that were then made, the ill-acquired goods that were restored, the debts that were for ever cancelled? And amidst all this continued danger, not one of these hooded men of mercy perished; so that the crown was wanting to the soul, though the soul was not wanting to the crown.*

Bartholomew de Martyribus, archbishop of Bragua, during the plague of 1568, received letters from the young king, Don Sebastian, conjuring him to leave that city while it lasted, and adding that his life was necessary for the welfare of the whole kingdom; but he replied, that as a pastor he was bound to offer his life for his flock; and accordingly there he remained, encouraging the magistrates, directing the police, and administering almost incessantly with his own hands to the sick.† The exertions of the Dominicans in Lisbon, on that occasion, corresponded with the highest expectations that could have been formed of their mercy.

During the great pestilence of Italy, which first broke out in Rome in 1575, the bishop of Imola, Vincent Herculani, distinguished himself in the same manner as St. Charles Borromeo at Milan; his presence was said even to console the dying. The whole diocese, as well as the city of Imola, beheld his personal exertions; for he went to seek the peasant or the shepherd in his cabin, as well as the rich noble in his palace. It was in the following year that St. Charles, at Milan, gave to his flock that example of mercy which is so celebrated. The holy prelate had a peculiar esteem for

* Touron, tom. v. liv. 40.

* Annales Capucinarum, 105—8.

† Touron, tom. iv. liv. 31.

the order of Capuchins; and by his directions, Francis, vicar of the province, and James, father guardian of the city, sent letters through all the Milanese states, exciting the friars to that pious labour, who were not slow to obey or wanting in voluntary zeal; for the letter was hardly read in each convent, when nearly all the brethren pressed forward to offer their lives; so that it was necessary to limit the number of elected from each house to twelve; and the names of all these devoted men, many of whom were distinguished preachers, may be read in the annals of their order. Father Philip, of Milan, was appointed to govern the great lazaret without the city, in which there were about one thousand men devoted to serve the sick; and as he rendered his soul to God within a month, Father Paul Salodiensis succeeded him. The friars spared not themselves, night and day, preparing the beds, giving food, and administering the sacraments, and intrepidly discharging every office of fraternal charity to the sick, the dying, and the dead, until the cessation of the plague after twenty months.*

In the year 1580, in the space of four months, about sixty thousand persons perished by pestilence in Paris. At that time, Father Peter, guardian of the convent of Capuchins in that city, and five of the friars, consecrated themselves to assist the sick; and of these, three fell in the discharge of their ministry. The friars were joined in this work by the most religious fathers of the society of Jesus, of whom some passed to Christ with the same praise.†

At Lyons, Cardinal du Plessis de Richelieu, the archbishop, when the plague ravaged that city in 1635, daily exposed his life for his flock, like a good shepherd, visiting the sick and administering the sacraments.‡

Peter de Tapia, in 1649, refused the archbishopric of Valentia, and shortly after consented to be translated from Segovia to the see of Cordova, for the reason that the plague was raging in the latter diocese at the time. Before setting out to it, he told all his domestics and officers that he would send them to their respective homes if they had not courage to follow him, and they all with one voice replied that they were ready to follow him to death. On arriving at Cordova, after taking possession of the cathedral, his first visit was to the hospital

of St. Lazarus; and twice every week he visited the other hospitals of the city.*

In fact, every country and almost every city had traditions respecting the heroic charity of some of its great men, during similar days of visitation. The city of Villefranche commemorated her illustrious magistrate, John de Pomairole, and her Father Ambrose, of the Franciscan order, Marseilles her compassionate and intrepid bishop, at the head of Capuchins, Observantines, Jesuits, Carmelites, Augustinians, Dominicans, and Trinitarians—all affectionate in the discharge of their duty,—as having profited by these afflictions to win the beatitude of the merciful. At Marseilles the bishop was every day in the streets, traversing all quarters, visiting the highest and lowest classes with the tenderest devotion; and in a few weeks, the sum he distributed amounted to twenty-five thousand crowns.

But it would be endless to multiply such records. I shall only remind thee, reader, in conclusion, that here, again, we have been traversing a soil which owes its riches and its fruits exclusively to Catholicism. If any one should doubt this proposition, let him refer to the history of the plague in London, in the year 1665, and the spectacle there presented will oblige him to admit it; for nothing was wanting, on that occasion, that human wisdom or virtue could supply, neither the courage of magistrates, nor the liberal donations of the absent; but there was not the charity of the blessed merciful to inspire the public arrangements to meet the calamity; there was no friar to console the dying; there was no bishop to revive the courage of the people, and to distribute amongst them the wealth of an affluent see; there were no sisters of charity to tend the sick, no brothers of mercy to give the dead burial; but in their place men heard of acts of "charitable relief," in pursuance of which every house in which any person was attacked by the plague was immediately shut up and converted into a prison, where the sound and the sick were left to perish together; and if any person should have visited one of the sick, or entered into any infected house, the house which he inhabited was to be, in like manner, shut up; which contemporary writers inform us "was counted a very cruel and unchristian method," as many people perished in these miserable confinements, shrieking out dismally and in vain for assistance, who might otherwise have escaped. And, indeed, the details

* Annales Capucinatorum, 793—4.

† Id. 852.

‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. i.

* Tournon, tom. v. liv. 36.

which are given on this head exceed all that can be imagined of despotism on the part of government, and of cool barbarity on the part of those who were its agents, many of whom were slain by the exasperated people. Instead of hearing of the tender and heroic solicitude of nuns, innumerable frightful stories, we are assured, went about of the cruel behaviour of nurses and watchmen, and of their hastening on the fate of those they tended or guarded in their sickness, by starving or smothering them. Instead of the friar's sermon, pathetic yet inspiring, so as to make men forget their danger and embrace the cross with confidence, and believe that the sufferings of that moment were not worthy to be compared with the joy which was reserved for them, dismal discourses were heard, filling the people with despair, and not guiding them to cry for mercy, ministers and preachers of all professions erecting altar against altar, whilst, on the one hand, fanatics ran naked through the streets, crying out in a manner horrible, so as to terrify the people to the last degree, and, on the other, blasphemy was echoing from houses of assembly, and diabolic language addressed to passengers in the street, men talking atheistically, and making a jest at the word judgment of God, and insulting the mourners, who lamented the fate of friends. Instead of the constancy and affection of Catholic families, we hear of all servants being turned off in these days of calamity, and left friendless and helpless, without employment and without habitation, so as to augment the number of the poor to an extent most fearful and horrible, De Foe expressly saying, that this was a time when no one had room to pity the distresses of others, that all compassion was gone, self-preservation appearing to be the first law, children flying from their parents, and parents doing the like to their children. Instead of the asylums opened for all the indigent by monks and prelates, we read of only two pest-houses, to which no one was admitted unless money was given, or security for money. Finally, instead of the solemn processions in thanksgiving to God, on the cessation of the pestilence, and churches built, as at Venice, to be served by the friars who survived, we behold the triumphant entry of the ministers who had fled during the danger, and who now returned, ejected the unlicensed preachers, who had taken possession of their pulpits in their absence, and harassed them with their penal laws; while, for holy melody and devout emblazonment, we are told to listen to the scornful taunts of the people

against their clergy, and to mark the verses and scandalous reflections upon them, which are placed upon the church doors, setting forth "Here is a pulpit to be let or sold."*

A recent biographer of Luther observes, that although he acted himself after other maxims, his words form a disagreeable contrast with the charity and devotion of the Catholic clergy. Truly, he might well make the remark; for, hear the reformer instructing one of his pastors—"It is sufficient if the people go to communion thrice or four times a year publicly. The communion given separately to individuals would become a burden too heavy upon the ministers, especially in time of pestilence. Besides, one ought not to render the Church, with her sacraments, the slave of every one; above all, of those who despise her, and yet who desire that on every occasion she should be always ready for them who do nothing ever for her." What is most remarkable in this passage, perhaps, is its conformity with the language which has continued to be uttered under similar circumstances by those who still advocate the general principles of that revolution. But, assuredly, however great and afflicting the contrast might be, there was no ground for surprise to those who took a philosophic view of the two sides, and who considered how every part of Catholicism was jointed in, as it were, and cemented together. That new form which death had assumed, and that spirit of penance which we beheld in the fourth book, were elements which entered largely into the composition of the blessed merciful; and with these the self-styled reformers were not well provided, as they confessed themselves: for, on occasion of the plague being at Magdebourg, we find Luther writing as follows to one of his friends:—"I had experience some years past of the terror which you describe as prevailing at present; and I am astonished to see that the more we preach life in Jesus Christ, the more does the fear of death increase amongst the people. Whether it be that before, under the reign of the pope, a false hope of life diminished for them the fear of death, and that now the true hope of life being placed before their eyes, they feel how weak is nature to believe in the conqueror of death; or, whether it be that God tempts us by this weakness, and permits Satan amidst this terror to take more force and courage, while we lived in the faith of the pope, we were like drunken men, asleep or mad, taking death for life, not knowing

* De Foe's Hist. of the Plague.

what death was, or the wrath of God. But, now that the light has shone, and that the wrath of God is better known, nature hath awakened from sleep and folly. That is the reason why they fear death more than formerly.* Unfortunately, however, for the plausibility of this explanation, it appears that the guides were not exempt from the general influence in this respect, as their chief admitted in answer to the Doctor Jonas, who had exclaimed on one occasion, Ah, how magnificently does St. Paul speak of his death! adding, I cannot, however, believe him. When he replied, It seemed to me, also, that St. Paul himself could not think on this subject with as much force as he could speak; I myself, unhappily, cannot on this article believe as strongly as I can preach, or speak and write as strongly as other men imagine I can believe.†

You perceive, reader, what a space retrograde had been already passed by these men. Alas! alas! whether more they spoke on this head, or afterwards were mute, I know not: they had gone already so far back; yet thus much I read, and in remembrance treasured it. Let us return to the men of faith and mercy,—to the people that were in a state of childhood, as we are now told, who, according to the remarkable expression of the chief apostate, “knew not what death was, nor the wrath of God.”

I have purposely avoided detaining the reader with evidence drawn from the ancient testamentary records connected with the charity of men to the poor in ages of faith; for, though on many accounts the information which may be derived from an examination of wills and charters of foundation is highly curious and worthy of an historian's attention, documents of this kind demonstrating what were the opinions of men in the middle ages, respecting the manner in which the poor might be best assisted, and clearly indicating by what works they believed their own merit could be increased, and the greatest benefit conferred on their posterity, yet the principle of posthumous charity was of so little comparative importance, when living manners were under the influence of faith and love, that our attention need not be formally directed to examine its action and effects. The holy fathers, as well as the scholastic and mystic philosophers of the middle ages, had warned men from being deluded by the opinion that they might fulfil their obligations to the poor without showing mercy during their lives.

* Michelet, Mem. de Luth. ii. 68.
† Id. ii. 165.

“I will leave my riches to the poor after my death.” That is, adds St. Basil, you will become charitable when you shall be no longer among men. When with the dead, you will be the friend of your brethren. While alive, devoted to pleasure, you hardly deigned to regard the poor. After death, what actions can you perform? There can be no more good works after life. You engage to be beneficent, by writing and on a tablet; but how can you be sure that even this power will be left to you? or if you should have made a will, that the transposition of a letter may not suffice to have it set aside after your death? Your conduct is as absurd as it is criminal. While you lived you preferred yourself to the precepts of God, and now you will leave what you cannot retain to God! Had you been immortal, you would never have had regard to his precepts. Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked. A dead man is not led to the altar at the offering.*

“Note well,” says Guy de Roye, in his *Doctrinal de Sapience*, “that it is better for you to give during your life one penny for the honour of God than a mountain of gold after your death. On a dark road you do not place the lantern behind your back. There are persons who, if they have corn, wine, cheese, fruits, or other provisions, or old vestments, or shoes, will leave them there to rot rather than give them to their poor neighbours, or to the poor for God. It is avarice and grievous sin to keep things till they can serve no one. Delay not to give till your dying day, when you can carry away nothing.” The great Christian orators of later times have only therefore expressed in language more artificial, though perhaps less effective, the truth on this head universally taught in the middle ages. Bourdaloue said nothing new when he asked, “Has this man given much at his death?” and added, in reply, “Nay, he has given nothing, but he has left somewhat; and he has left nothing but what he could not retain: he has kept it till the last moment; and if he could carry it away with him, neither God nor the poor would have had any part in it. What profit is there in such alms? For it is of faith, Christians, that all your alms after death have no virtue to save you. They may affect the condition of your soul in purgatory, but as for salvation, these works after life are barren works, because the affair of salvation is already decided, and the sentence is without appeal.”†

* St. Basil Hom. Cont. Disc.

† Bourdaloue, Sermon sur l'Aumône.

This chapter hath exceeded the due limits, but how important are the disclosures which we have derived from it! Here we have seen whole generations impressed with a practical conviction, that neither fortune hath any thing better than the power, nor nature than the will to show mercy to as many men as possible,—and, what should move a true lover of wisdom still more, whole generations taught to consider and understand profoundly all the deep mysteries of Providence in the order of rich and poor, and all the secrets of evangelic grace in the salvation of both by charity. Perhaps some hapless wanderer through the wastes of modern speculation may be awakened by these memorials of ancient faith to a sense of the position in which the propagators of error have placed him; for here he has seen enough to be convinced, if he do not act treacherously towards himself, that the spirit of men in Catholic ages was to acknowledge no other religion as true and undefiled before God, but what the Apostle describes, “to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world;” which is only expressed in more detail in that rule of St. Benedict, to the influence of which so many hearts under a secular habit, were daily subjected, as in the instances expressly

recorded of Lewis the Emperor, and Cosmo de Medicis, and which commands all subject to it, *pauperes recreare, nudum vestire, infirmum visitare, mortuum sepelire, in tribulatione subvenire dolentem consolari a sæculi actibus se facere alienum.** Such was the code of the middle ages.

Ah, where is the reader now with breast so steeled against all stings of conscience and salutary fear of God's terrific judgment, as to feel any longer uppermost in his thoughts the phrases of men, who talk of dark ages, superstition, and ignorance, when alluding to Catholic states, to generations which feared nothing but that judgment, and which sought with such acuteness to avert it by charity to the poor! Fearful, though sublime and admirable task, would that it had been in abler hands, to expose a history comprising sixteen centuries, of which the most pervading and striking phenomenon must remain for ever inexplicable to human genius, however penetrating, without one key to render it intelligible, and that the parable of Dives, and the words read in the Gospel, with which Christ will judge those on his right hand and those on his left, in presence of the hosts of heaven!

• Reg. S. Ben. c. 4.



CHAPTER IX.



TO describe all the various institutions of mercy which existed during the middle ages, would be an endless task; and to impart an adequate idea of their merits, by citing didactic pieces, without, as it were, a local and minute inspection of what was established, is impossible; for it is in such works that one perceives the truth of what an ancient French writer remarks, that the heart is more ingenious than the understanding. Charity rendered the rich man and the poor like Ulysses, πολυμήχανος,* fertile and subtle in expedients; not indeed like the Homeric hero, to extricate himself from the perils of life, but to remove or alleviate the multiplied wants and calamities of his fellow-creatures. Amor Jesu nobilis, ad magna operanda impellit, et ad desideranda semper perfectiora excitat. In cities, therefore, in deserts, amidst which cloistered brethren dwelt in happier days, wherever we direct our steps, within the realms that faith once illumined, Catholicism has left some memorial, by which we know that the blessed merciful have passed,—some monument, vital with mind, attesting the subtle action of a most loving heart, which, to an ordinary traveller, may seem only some rude wall, perhaps, or broken trophy, but on which a poet, with the tender penetration of a Wordsworth, may describe his fastening “an eye tear glazed.” Johnson used to say, that the real criterion of civilization consisted in the degree of provision made for the happiness of the poor; and if that proposition be admitted, we must conclude that the middle ages were more entitled to the praise to which the modern communities lay claim, than any other period in the history of man. To win the beatitude of the merciful, there were, it must be remembered, other virtues required in regard to the poor besides ministering to their corporal necessities; and truly, in fulfilling the spiritual works of mercy towards them, the devotion of men in the middle ages was admirable, and such as can never be suffi-

ciently praised; but having already had occasion to witness their respect for the poor, their meekness in relation to them, their readiness to console, their assiduity to counsel and instruct them, it will not be necessary to give any further illustrations; though, were time and space allowed, it would not be an unpleasant field for reminiscences. Poets who sing so often the interceding grace of a St. Elmo, to whose prayers the Spanish and Portuguese sailors commend their bark in tempests, would not be ungrateful to an historian who should remind them that this saint was known in history as St. Peter Goncalvez, who had exchanged the honours and pleasures of a court for the privilege of teaching the Catechism to the poor children of the fishermen and sailors on the coasts of the Peninsula.* One might write a large book upon the education which was given to the poor in the middle ages by the charity of the rich. The parents of the celebrated Lewis of Grenada were indigent, obscure persons, but the marquis de Mondejar supplied them with means for educating their son.† Similar instances are innumerable.

In the sixteenth century, in the public grammar school of Padua, founded by Annibal Rugerio, the boys and youths of the city were taught gratuitously both Greek and Latin.‡ But there yet remains unnoticed an order of facts more striking still, as attesting the passage of the blessed merciful upon earth, to the examination of which we must now proceed. If we open the annals of any city, and examine the rise and progress of its charitable foundations, we cannot but feel surprise and admiration at the prodigious and persevering activity of the principle which has produced such effects. What a series of institutions, directed to some purpose of love and mercy, is presented in the history of Paris alone; and what a multitude of all ranks and estates of men co-operated with one heart and mind to conceive, establish, and perpe-

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. + Id. tom. iv. liv. 30.

† Bern. Scard. De Antiq. Patavii, Lib. ii. 5.

• Od. i. 285.

tuates them! Kings and queens, princes, nobles, bishops, priests, magistrates, citizens, tradesmen, and even mendicants, all conspired in the same direction, and with such comprehensive and subtle skill, that no kind of misery was forgotten, or left unprovided with the fitting means to remove or alleviate it. De Bourgueville, speaking of the charitable foundations at Caen, observes, that posterity will be able easily to judge that their predecessors were very faithful to God, charitable to the poor, and firm in their hope in his mercy, when it will remark the foundations which they have left to the value every year of three thousand livres.

No ancient legislator ever proposed a hospital for the poor and infirm, or a hospice for the stranger and destitute. When peasants, or any wanderers from the country, came into Rome, if they did not leave it after the market, they had no resource but to pass the night in the arcades, and about the forum, or in the porches before the temples. The Greeks were ignorant even of the name of an hospital; the word "nosocomium" was first employed by St. Jerome and St. Isidore. It is true, in the Prytaneus at Athens there was provided subsistence for the wives and children of those who had suffered for their country, but there was no asylum in sickness. The infirm and sick are wholly overlooked in the institutions of Lycurgus, as in those of all other legislators of Greece, although the father of medicine, Hippocrates, with a solemn oath swears, that he will visit all his life the poor gratuitously. In ancient Rome there was the same neglect and indifference in regard to the poor. Numa made no provision for them; and during the republic the bounties of the state were given only to those who were in health. The emperors were not more humane, though it is true certain baths, or thermes, were consecrated to the use of the people. The rich used to give daily to their poor clients the sportula, of which Juvenal so often speaks; but there was no public asylum for the poor, and in sickness they were left to expire under their own miserable tiles, which afforded no shelter from sun or rain. The slaves were left unburied; so that Horace speaks of the Esquiline hill as whitened with the number of bones collected by carnivorous birds. Cato, whom Plutarch praises for living familiarly with his slaves as if his companions in the labours of husbandry, never thought of providing for them in sickness or old age; and in his book of instructions, *De Re Rusticâ*, he

prescribes, as an important point of domestic economy, to sell off old slaves, in order not to nourish, he says, useless persons. Neither the religion nor the philosophy of Greece and Rome tended to comfort the poor. The divinities were cruel; the stoic affected to despise the sufferings of the indigent; the Epicurean took no thought of them. In this respect Paganism was everywhere the same. Throughout the vast regions of Mogul, India, and China, the use of hospitals is unknown to this day. In no country did Christianity find such institutions existing. It seems incredible, though it is most true, that it was only in the thirteenth century the custom of putting to death old infirm persons was abolished in Poland by Albert the Great, who was sent there as legate of the Holy See, so little prepared were those nations for constructing vast palaces expressly for the aged and infirm. In respect to institutions of mercy, all countries which had not beheld the light of faith were equally destitute. It seems unaccountable, therefore, that so grave an historian as Niebuhr should seize the occasion, when speaking of building the Lateran hospital, in the twelfth century, to denominate that epoch, the midnight of barbarism at Rome. Truly it was a blessed night which beheld such foundations, even though their walls may have been built with fragments of statues, and other works of Grecian art! The history of their rise and progress can be traced in few words. In the year 380 the first hospital in the West was founded by Fabiola, a devout Roman lady, without the walls of Rome. St. Jerome says expressly "that this was the first of all."* And he adds, "that it was a country house, destined to receive the sick and infirm, who before used to lie stretched on the public ways." The Pilgrim's hospital at Rome, built by Pammachius, became also celebrated. In 330, the priest Zotichus, who had followed Constantine to Byzantium, established in that city, under his protection, a hospice for strangers and pilgrims. This house was built on the plan of the hospice at Jerusalem, which Hircan had erected there one hundred and fifty years before Christ, in expiation for having opened and plundered the tomb of David, and in order to convert the riches he had found there to a benevolent purpose; but it is supposed by Mongez that this hospice was only opened during the feast of the passover. St. Isidore says, in his *Etymologies*, "that this was the

* Ad Oceanum de Fabiola.

first *ξενοδοκίον*, or hospice for strangers." St. Basil, who founded the first hospitals of Asia, mentions a house for the reception of the sick and of travellers, built on a spot formerly uninhabited, near the city of Cesarea, which became afterwards the ornament of the country, and like a second city. St. Basil used frequently to visit it, in order to instruct and console the poor. St. Chrysostom built several hospitals at Constantinople. Justinian, in the year 550, erected at Jerusalem the famous hospital of St. John; and his example was followed by his successors with such zeal, that according to Ducange, in his Commentary, on the Byzantine History, there were thirty-five establishments of charity in that city alone: there was the Nosocomium, or asylum for the sick; the Xenodochium, for pilgrims and strangers; the Ptochium, or hospice for the poor; the Brephotrophium, or house of education for poor children; the Orphanotrophium, or house for orphans; the Gerocomium, or asylum for the aged; the Pandochreum, or gratuitous inn; and the Morotrophium, or house for lunatics.

St. Augustin says, "that hospitals have their origin in the truth of religion." In a material sense, too, they owed their existence to the ministers of religion; for, in fact, the first hospitals were the bishops' houses.* But as the episcopal resources proved insufficient, the Church decreed, that the canons should give the tenths of their revenues and oblations to maintain the sick poor. In early times the hospitals were always under the direction of priests: thus St. Isidore presided over that at Alexandria, in the time of the Patriarch Theophilus. It was determined by Charlemagne, in 816, that at each see one of the canons should always govern the hospital; and that this asylum should be everywhere near the cathedral, in order that the clergy might easily visit it. The consequence of this early discipline can be seen at Paris, where the Hotel Dieu is in the place before the cathedral, and at Brussels, where the great hospital adjoins the church of St. John, which is one of the oldest in that city. Lanfranc, and many other great English prelates, are recorded to have signalized the first year of their episcopacy by erecting houses for the reception of the sick. However, in subsequent times, it became often necessary to change this locality, for

in consequence of the confined space which resulted, and the increase of cities, the physical disadvantages in consequence were found to be great. Tenon, in his elaborate work on the hospitals of Paris, proves that, in consequence of the circumstances resulting from its position, the mortality in the Hotel Dieu at Paris, in the last century, was greater than in any other hospital. In a very early age, however, hospitals were not exposed to this inconvenience of locality, for churches being rarely built within the walls of cities, their site was, consequently, in every respect advantageous. Most Basilicas, as we before remarked, were raised over the tombs of martyrs, which were always without the walls, and it was formerly forbidden to bury bodies within their enclosure.* The clergy, however, were not the sole authors of these monuments of mercy: many hospitals owed their foundation to lay persons. Pammachius established, at his own expense, a hospital at Porto; and St. Gallican, a Roman patrician and consul, who suffered martyrdom under Julian, after enjoying the honours of a triumph, and the friendship of the great Constantine, might be seen serving the sick poor, and washing the pilgrims' feet, in the hospital which he had built at Ostia,† to which place he retired, along with Hilarion, in consequence of hearing that there were collected there many thousand miserable persons without assistance.

It was by similar establishments that the piety of the first French kings became distinguished. Still the religious connection was always seen. Thus, though Paris was become the seat of empire, yet in consequence of the antiquity of the church of Lyons, Childebert erected the first hospital in that city. The fifth Council of Orleans, in the middle of the sixth century, speaks of this hospital as surpassing all others in extent and salubrity. Rheims and Autun pretend that their hospitals are of equal antiquity, but it is thought, without sufficient ground. Soon after these three foundations, about the year 638, Paris enjoyed a similar advantage. The statutes of this hospital, composed in 1220, are still extant, from which it appears, that great attention was paid to the morals of the persons who served it. The capitularies of succeeding monarchs bear testimony to their zeal in multiplying

* Sainte-Foix, *Essais Historiques sur Paris*, tom. ii. Jaillot, *Recherches sur Paris*, i. 103.

* Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 230.

† Clavereau. *Mém. sur les Hôpitaux*. 29.

these great establishments. The eighth and ninth centuries were particularly distinguished in the west for the number of hospitals and other institutions of mercy, which were founded. At that time every monastery had a house adjoining it for the poor and the stranger.* Thus, in the ninth century, St. Anselm, Abbot of Nonantula, built a Xenodochium, with a chapel served by monks, where the poor were daily nourished, and where every person that presented himself was received to hospitality, and fed; and on all the kalends, two hundred poor people used to be entertained.† The sick were even frequently lodged in a building adjoining, for whom the monks prepared medicines, as we find in Italy at the present day, where the dispensary is always in a monastery. The Senior, who explains to a disciple the rule of St. Antony, reminds him that it is the duty of monastic superiors to receive old sick men, blind and paralytic, and to love them, although they can render no other service to the house but what is spiritual.‡ And that the western monks in later times were anxious to relieve and console the sick and infirm, is proved by many records. Orderic Vitalis says, "that originally the abbey of Ouches nourished seven lepers, each of whom received daily a portion equal to that of a monk."§ Walafrid Strabo mentions, in his life of St. Othmar, abbot of St. Gall, that this holy man built a hospital for lepers near the monastery, and that at night he used often to walk to it, in order to comfort and tend these poor creatures. Frequently when he went abroad he used to return without a tunic or cap, having given what he wore to the poor. In 1377 there was founded a hospital for the sick near the great abbey of Aurillac, in the diocese of Clermont.|| During the Pontificate of Innocent III. the Count of Blancoburg founded, adjoining the Cistercian abbey of St. Michael, in the diocese of Halberstad, a hospital for the sick and poor, in honour of the Holy Ghost; and the pope, in his letter to the Abbot, says, "our dear son, the noble count, in giving a portion of his best land for this purpose, and one hundred marks of silver, desires that the hospital should be constructed, not in his,

but in our name."* At the abbey of Monte Cassino also there was a hospital in ancient times, the support of which was one of the works of piety for which that monastery had been celebrated.† About the year 1240 there was erected, in front of the Benedictine monastery of St. Maximinus, in the suburbs of Treves, under the Abbot Henry a Broich, and with the unanimous consent of the whole convent, a vast hospital, which was dedicated under the invocation of St. Elizabeth, to which the said abbot and convent granted the third part of all the revenues and goods of the abbey at that time, which was thenceforth for ever to be devoted to the sole use of the poor, the weak, and the sick; which foundation was, at their petition, confirmed by pontifical diploma of Innocent IV. and enriched to an incredible extent by letters of indulgence from Henry and Arnold, Archbishop of Treves, granted to all the faithful who, through Christian charity, should make donations to the hospital.‡ The rector was always chosen from the bosom of the convent, but the Counts of Manderscheid were the temporal advocates and patrons. The abbatial constitutions, during the fourteenth and two succeeding centuries, evince the greatest zeal to provide against the possibility of any abuse in the employment of its funds: the words are, "We beseech and exhort our successors, the abbots and brethren in the bowels of Christ and of his holy Mother, to take care that the goods of this hospital, magnificently endowed, shall be always applied according to the foundation to the use of the poor and sick, and never alienated for any other purpose; but if the contrary should ever take place, we execrate the perpetrators, and desire that they may be struck with anathema and excommunication." In 1442, when the monastery was obliged to yield some of its possessions on pledge, the letters expressly except the revenues due from them to the hospital; and in 1610, when Attilius, the apostolic nuncio, visited it, the charter of his visitation provides, that the hospital should continue to be well governed, and its goods applied, as before, to the use of the poor and sick. Later in the seventeenth century, however, abuse crept in, so that the Abbot, Alexander Henn, styled in the

* Joam. Devoti Instit. Canonic. Lib. ii. tit. xii. §. 1.

† Vita ejus apud Mabill. acta S. Ord. S. Bened. iv. 1.

‡ Exposit. Sent. S. Antonii Ab.

§ Hist. Nor. liv. iii.

|| Gallia Christ. tom. ii. 499.

* Inn. III. Epist. Lib. xi. 69.

† Id. Epist. Lib. xii. 182.

‡ Hist. Hospit. S. Elisab. Trev.

Chronologia of the Abbots, the ornament of his order, who was elected in 1672, lamented bitterly the neglected state of the hospital, and ascribed to it all the calamities which had befallen the abbey during the forty years preceding. "Christ our Lord," he says, "will send to eternal fire those who have neglected to feed him hungry, to clothe him naked, and to visit him in sickness. The bread of the indigent is their life, and he who defraudeth the poor is a man of blood. I also, during many years, converted to the use and utility of the monastery certain annual returns and emoluments of the hospital of St. Elizabeth, including its tithes in many places, which it would be tedious to mention: sed O Deus, Deus meus, ignosce mihi, quia ignorans hæc ego feci." Such are the words of this holy abbot, addressed to his successors, written in his own hand, in a book entitled "*Calamitates Monasterii S. Maximini*;" and concluding thus: "*Auxiliare et exhortare ad succurrendum.*" Of such abuse, indeed, we find notice in earlier times; for there is a letter of St. Bernard to the Abbess of Faverney, in the diocese of Besançon, exhorting her to pay diligent attention to the support and defence of the hospital house of God, which is served by the brethren of the monastery under her government, and to restore whatever funds may have been at any time alienated from it by preceding abbesses.*

It appears that in ancient times even the secular clergy used to give medicinal advice to the poor; for at Paris they used to receive patients, we are told, at the entrance of the cathedral below the tower, on the right hand.† We observed before, that as physicians, however, the clergy could not generally act, consistent with the observance of ecclesiastical discipline. Pope Martin IV. prohibited all monks, excepting Carthusians, from studying medicine, though it was still permitted them to supply medicines; and sometimes even in respect to giving advice there were exceptions made in favour of certain individuals. Dom Nicolas Alexandre Benedictine, of the congregation of St. Maur, published two works on Medicine; but, as is remarked, his only object in so doing was to benefit the poor.‡ Clerks and monks giving advice and medicine gratuitously to indigent persons for the love of

God, were subject, however, at no time, to ecclesiastical penalties.*

From the reign of Charles-le-Chauve, the distinction is made between royal hospitals and those that were of other origin. In 1274 there was an ordinance which prescribed that, every day during the travels of the king, the tenth part of the bread supplied to the court should be given to the nearest hospital. St. Louis, by this decree, only confirmed the immemorial custom of his predecessors.†

The civil power co-operated with the founders of these houses of mercy, and granted them privileges and exemptions. Novario says, that when it was proposed in a certain university to erect a hospital to receive sick poor, and to shelter wretched strangers, he gave his judgment, that a certain citizen could be compelled to sell his house for that purpose, as it was a pious work, in favour of the miserable, and consequently to be preferred not only to private but also to public utility.‡ In our day the revolted citizens of Lyons, who had been wounded in the church of St. Nicaise, were dragged out of the Hôtel Dieu by the hands of the police; but in the middle ages, hospitals as well as churches enjoyed the right of sanctuary. The Holy See, yielding to pious vows and just prayers, was accustomed to receive under its protection the hospitals of the sick in all parts of the world.§ We have the letters of Pope Innocent III. acceding to the prayer of the master and brethren of the hospital of St. Sanson, at Constantinople, who had presented a petition for this purpose;|| and conferring the same privilege on the hospital of St. Thomas Martyr, and St. Antony at Caen.¶

In point of historic interest the hospital of every city ranked in third degree after the church and monastery, to which, as we have seen, its origin might generally be traced. Like them, also, it had even its chronicle and its records, from which one might derive many beautiful and affecting narratives connected with the mercy and tenderness of the ancient Catholic manners. The origin of the great hospital for lepers at Paris was a collection of little

* Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miserab. Person. 162.

† Mongez, Dissertation sur l'Antiquité des Hôpitaux.

‡ Novarii Tractat. de Priv. Miserab. Person. 36.

§ Innocent III. Epist. Lib. xiii. 22.

|| Epist. Lib. xi. 123.

¶ Epist. Lib. xiii. 51.

* Epist. cccxc.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 1.

‡ Bibliothèque Hist. et Crit. des Auteurs de la Cong. de St. Maur.

cabins, in which they were lodged between Paris and St. Denis. Odo de Dueil, a monk of St. Denis, relates, as an eye-witness, that in the year 1147, when King Louis-le-Jeune came to St. Denis to take up the standard before going to the crusade, he stopped on his way, entered into these cabins, and visited all the lepers, attended only by two persons.*

In the history of such foundations there are many details worthy of remark. The condition and character of the founders, the cause which first inspired them with the idea, the object they had in view, the means with which they were provided, are all circumstances that can furnish matter for interesting investigation. Let us take a glance at the records of some houses of this kind.

Historians are in general agreed, that the Hôtel Dieu of Paris was founded about the year 660, by St. Landry, Bishop of Paris; and that Erchinvald, Count of Paris, took part in this good work, and gave up his own palace to form it.† Philip Augustus is the first of the kings whose generosity towards it is mentioned by history. In 1227 St. Louis bestowed such favours upon it, that he has been regarded as its second founder; but persons in every rank of society have always been among its benefactors. The hospice of St. Mery, in the same city, was established by Viennet, the curate of that parish; that of St. André des Arcs, by Desbois de Rochefort, curate of St. Andrew's parish; the Cochin Hospital, in the suburb of St. James, is so called after its founder, who was curate of St. Jacques du-Haut-Pas, who devoted all his means to the work, and was assisted by his pious relations.‡ The Hôtel Dieu, in the town of St. Denis, was founded by Clovis II. in the seventh century. The Hospital and Church of St. Julian, in Paris, surnamed "Des Ménétriers," was founded, in 1330, by two minstrels, Jacques Grave and Hugue de Lorrain, who were excited by witnessing the misery of a poor woman in the streets. On the portal was carved the figure of a jongleur holding his rebec.§ It was Robert Montri, a seller of wine, noted for his piety, that founded the Hospital and Convent of the Magdalen, in 1618, on being moved by the situation of two penitent women, who made known to him their distress, prompted

by his celebrated character for devotion and mercy.* The Hospital of St. Gervais, at Paris, had been constructed at the expense and by the care of a mason, named Gavin, and of his son, who was a priest: this was in 1171.† The hospital of the Charity of our Lady, in Paris, was founded by a young woman of the lower ranks of life, who had neither means nor birth that seemed adequate to such an undertaking: Frances de la Croix, or Simonne Gauguin, was the foundress, in 1624. In this institution young women consecrated their lives to serve and console the sick poor.‡ In 1576, the Hospital de l'Oursine, for poor orphans, was founded by Nicolas Houel, an apothecary and druggist. He desired that they should prepare medicine for other poor, and supply them gratis.§ In the year 1171 Jocius de Londonna, on his return from Jerusalem, going into the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, saw there a chamber, in which, de toute ancienneté, were lodged some poor scholars: he left money to supply these poor scholars with beds, and to give them besides twelve écus per month, engaging them each in turn to carry the cross and holy water before the bodies of such as should die in the hospital, and that they should recite the penitential psalms, and the prayers for the dead, every night.|| The hospice of Jesus, in the suburb of St. Laurent, was founded by St. Vincent of Paul, to whom a rich man gave the means, on the express condition that his name should never be made known. This furnished a retreat for old men, for whose use there was a chapel adjoining.¶ In the same capital there was a separate house of charity to receive sick boys, and maidens of a tender age. In other Catholic cities the history of similar institutions presents the same features. At Catania, Bartholomew Altavilla, a great magistrate, gave his own house, in 1396, to form a hospital, which bore the title of the Ascension; and that of the incurables, in the same city, was founded in the house of Baron Militelli.** Padua reckons amongst her most illustrious women Sibylla, the wife of Baldo Boniface, who completed and richly endowed the great hospital of St. Francis, in that city, of which her husband had laid the foundation. In Venice there were many hos-

* St. Victor, *Tableau de Paris*, tom. ii. 710.

+ Id. ii. 847.

|| Id. ii. 1244.

§ Tom. iii. 514.

¶ Id. iii. ii. 707.

¶ Clavareau, *Mém. sur les Hôpit.*

** J. B. de Grossis *Catanens. Decachord. c. ii. M. 16. in Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.*

• Lebeuf, *Hist.* tom. ii. chap. iii.

+ Notice Historique sur l'Hôtel Dieu de Paris.

† Tenon, *Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hôpit.*

‡ St. Victor, *Tableau de Paris*, tom. ii. 680.

pitals and houses of mercy, founded by Venetian families, so early as in the eighth century, the patronage of which was still in the hands of the same race down to late times.*

Some institutions of this kind furnish interesting evidence in regard to the history of diseases. The Counts Donat and William Von Toggenburgh, in the fourteenth century, gave a house and land to the brethren of St. Anthony, to form a hospital at Utznach, for persons afflicted with St. Anthony's fire, or morbus sacer, an order founded by a French nobleman at Vienne, in Dauphiny. They also gave funds for their support, under the obligation that they should say two masses, and make a distribution of bread for their parents, Frederick and Kunigund, on their anniversary, and maintain a burning light by their grave.†

To the preaching of the clergy many celebrated institutions of mercy owe their immediate origin. Thus, in the annals of the Capuchins, we read of brother Archangelo, of Palermo, having persuaded by his eloquent sermons several noble women to construct a hospital for the comfort of the convalescent,‡ and of Jerome, of Pistoia, another celebrated preacher, having by one sermon at Florence induced Marieta, a pious lady of the noble house of Gondi, to found with her own purse a hospital of refuge for the support of poor maidens.§ Sometimes hospitals were founded and served by penitents, in expiation of their former errors. Durandus de Osca, and William of St. Antoninus, on renouncing the heresy of the Waldenses desired to evince their penitence and Catholicity by serving God in the poor, for which purpose they proposed to found two separate convents, one for men and the other for women, having a hospital in common, where the poor, and the stranger, and the sick might be received, with a church under the invocation of St. Mary, and to this there were to be attached funds for clothing the poor in winter; and Pope Innocent III. gave letters approving of their intention.||

At other times hospitals owed their origin to an association of pious laymen. Thus that of St. Margarite, at Bologna, which became so great an ornament to the city, was founded, in 1336, by the brethren

of St. Mary, of Death, who were merely charitable citizens, friends of the poor.*

The number of hospitals in great cities during the middle ages was prodigious, for the system of centralization in relation to such institutions would have been deemed pernicious, and utility was preferred to vain parade. In Rome, in the eighth century, under Pope Zacharia, there were four hospitals; and Stephen II., his successor, founded a fifth for a hundred poor; but in subsequent times their number greatly increased, so that there were reckoned there twenty-five rich and vast hospitals for the sick, for the poor, and for strangers.† In Florence in the sixteenth century, there were three hundred and five houses of charity, of which some were on a magnificent scale.‡ In Antwerp, there were thirty-three houses of charity endowed by the citizens.§ Paris alone contained forty-eight hospitals.|| In Besançon, which is a small city, there were five hospitals of charity. The incidental evidence of their number in the Gallia Christiana, is certainly calculated to excite surprise. In fact, before the revolution, France contained more than seven hundred hospitals;¶ and yet their multiplication did not prevent the establishment of hospitals on a great scale: that of the Holy Ghost at Rome received eighteen hundred patients; and those of Vienna and Naples admitted as many as three thousand.** The smallest towns and villages had then some house of mercy to receive the poor, which often supplied the means of transmitting to posterity the names of great men. The parish of Brie-Comte-Robert, in the diocese of Paris, is so called from Count Robert, grandson of King Lewis-le-Gros, who is known to have been the founder of the Hôtel Dieu, and of the church in that place, which contained so few inhabitants. Even to parish churches there were foundations attached for the relief of poor persons. Thus Audrand, Abbot of St. Fuscien, near Amiens, made a foundation in the church of St. Sulpice, at Paris, in 1570, leaving eight hundred livres to form a marriage portion every year for eight orphans, and twenty francs for four scholars, each of whom, during five years, was

* Splend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Italicae, v.

† Hldefons von Arx Geschichte S. Gallens, ii. 208. ‡ An. 1577. § An. 1570.

|| Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xv. 82.

• Sigonii, Ep. Bonon. Lib. iii.

† Bocium de Signis Eccles. l. x. c. 9.

‡ Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiae, 67.

§ Scribanus in sua Antwerp. tit. Liberalitas.

|| Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

¶ De la Motte, Essai Hist. 17.

** Clavereau, Mém. sur les Hôpit.

to have a hundred sols to purchase books and other articles, on condition of celebrating his anniversary in that church.* In the church of St. Cosma, at Paris, there was a place where many surgeons used to assemble, on the first Monday of every month, to give advice and medicine to all poor sick people, a custom established by their confraternity in the time of St. Louis, when the clergy of Nôtre Dame ceased to perform that office. In 1555, Nicholas Langlois, one of the provosts of surgeons, left a rent of fifty louis for the continuation of these offices. The canons of St. Peter, of Troyes, having founded the hospital of St. Nicholas in that city, in addition, in the year 1205, gave each a portion of their prebend, as an indemnity for their not being able to attend to the poor as they wished, from being obliged to be present in the church for the canonical office.† At Milan the Prince Antonio Tolomeo Trivulzi changed his palace into a hospital for the poor. In the same city, Francis Sforza IV. duke of Milan, and his wife Blanca Maria Visconti, gave up one of his palaces, with its gardens, to form the vast hospital, which is still the admiration of all who visit Milan. This was in 1456. Cosmo de Medicis caused to be constructed at Jerusalem a hospital for poor sick pilgrims.

The charitable works of individuals in the middle age were truly prodigious, and might be deemed incredible, if they were not commemorated by incontrovertible records. No pen, we are assured, could describe the mercy and devotion of Henry the Liberal, Count of Troyes, in the twelfth century. His alms enriched not only the diocese of Troyes, but those of Chalons and Langres, as well as the archiepiscopal province of Rheims. He founded thirteen hospitals, and thirteen churches of canons. Amongst these the Hôtel Dieu-le-Comte, which was built close to his palace, served by canons of St. Augustin, was on such a scale of grandeur, that William of Tyre styles him on that account, "Virum magnificum." Frodsard, in his History of the Church of Rheims, speaks of a distinguished man, named Attole, of whom the epitaph attests, that he founded twelve hospitals, through love for St. Remi, who was his contemporary. He is buried, with his son and his daughter, behind the altar in the church of St. Julian, in that city.‡

Jane, countess of Flanders, daughter of Baldwin, emperor of Constantinople, who died in 1244, and whose tomb might be seen in the abbey of Marquette, in Flanders, founded hospitals in Ghent, Ipres, Valenciennes, Bruges, and Lille.* So great was the number of hospitals built in Poland, Russia, Lithuania, and other distant regions of the north, by James Crescenti, when Provincial of the Dominicans, that it is said no one could tell them.† The prodigious number of hospitals built in Prussia by Winrich Von Kniprode, grand master of the Teutonic Order in the fourteenth century, is mentioned with astonishment even by profane historians. In every town he erected a hospital for the sick, and for the poor and helpless. He was styled the father of widows and orphans; and we are told that his chief object of solicitude, during the last days of his life, was to reform the arrangement of the great hospital of the Holy Ghost at Marienburg.‡

We observe, however, that it was not merely to persons invested with distinguished offices in the state, that society was indebted for these immense benefits. The tradesman, or the artist, or the obscure citizen of the middle ages, effected more than could now be accomplished by the exertions of a whole city where the work of division has taken place. The founder of one house of mercy is now considered to have immortalized his name; but what would have been his title in the middle ages? Guercino, who with his own hand painted one hundred and six altar pieces, and who bestowed the great riches which he had acquired by his profession, in acts of charity, built and endowed not merely one, but many hospitals and chapels, without appearing eminent in regard to such works. The celebrated Nicholas Flamel, whose tomb was in the church of St. Jacques de la Boucherie, at Paris, who was suspected of practising the occult sciences, on account of his immense riches, for which his contemporaries could not otherwise account, gave no other proof of his success in the trade of a scrivener, than by contributing to promote religious and charitable institutions. The Abbé Villain, in his history of that parish, has demonstrated, however, that it is easy to explain how he acquired such riches

* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, l. ii. 2.

† Daugherrois, *Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes*, 328.

‡ Liv. i. c. 23.

* Les Delices des Pais bas, l.

† Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i. liv. 3.

‡ Voight, *Geschichte Preussens*, b. v. 392.

without recurring to charges of that nature, for, that his trade, before the invention of printing, was sufficiently lucrative to furnish him with the means of accomplishing all his works, particularly when we take into account the industry of the man, and also the piety and austerity of his life. He and his wife founded and endowed fourteen hospitals,* to many of which were attached beautiful chapels. The whole life of this curious citizen, after the death of his wife, was past in seclusion with his servant Marguerite La-Quesnel and her daughter Collette, who used to contribute their mite to the prodigious alms of their master. Besides the great monuments of his charity, it is recorded, that he purchased, near the street of St. Martin, some old buildings, on the site of which he constructed several alms houses, to lodge poor people gratuitously, and here he placed an inscription to remind those who entered it, that he required in return from all whom he lodged, that they should say every day a Pater-noster and an Ave-Maria; and on the walls were sculptured many images kneeling; so that his guests had always the law before them written and represented.

To a traveller of the middle ages, the monuments of charity in each city and village, independent even of their religious interest, must have been often amongst the most curious objects for observation. Poets celebrate them, as may be witnessed in the works of Facius Ubertus, who mentions the vast hospital of Sienna, served by the brothers of a poor house.† The beautiful and superb hospital of Beaune resembled a palace rather than a retreat for the poor. It was founded by Rolin, a knight of Duke Philip the Good, of Burgundy.‡ At Caen, the hospital for the lepers had a park attached to it, enclosed within walls. A Duke of Normandy is said to have given this park in alms, which contains as much square land as a powerful archer could comprise within the range of his arrows.§

The hospitalers of St. Mandé at Paris occupied a space of about sixty acres, in a healthy and isolated spot. The Hôtel Dieu, which covers four acres with its original structure, extends in reality, by

comprising its seven dependent buildings, over a space of forty acres. The Hôtel Dieu at Lyons, to which we alluded in the beginning, is described by a late eminent surgeon in his travels, as one of the most magnificent hospitals in Europe. It was founded, as we have seen, in the middle of the sixth century, by Childebert, son of Clovis, and his wife, queen of the Ostragoths. The body of the building, which is of vast extent, is in the form of a Greek cross. The grand infirmary measures nearly five hundred feet in length. In the centre of the cross stands a high altar, which can be seen from the extremity of the most distant wards. There are two large and lofty halls, styled chambers of the convalescent, the patients of which are received at meals in the refectory. An order of nuns, one hundred and fifty in number, performs the duty of nurses, watches over and tends the sick, administers the medicines, and prepares the diet. The hospital can receive three thousand patients; the number now exceeds one thousand.*

Howard is filled with admiration at beholding the Roman hospitals of San Spirito, of the Benfratelli, of the Florentines, and of Santa Maria della Consolazione. The first was constructed by Pope Innocent III. on the site of a church and hospice, built by the Anglo-Saxon king Ina in the eighth century. No city in the world can boast of a more magnificent institution; its yearly expenditure exceeds one hundred thousand crowns.† Howard says that the hospital of Sancta Maria-de-Vita, at Bologna inspires satisfaction in every humane person who beholds it. On the noble hospital for the sick at Genoa he bestows unqualified praise. Indeed, he prefaces his remarks on Italy by observing that this country affords great instruction respecting hospitals as well as prisons; yet when he visited other Catholic countries he found the same active and enlightened charity in equal operation. He says that nothing can surpass the houses of mercy at Vienna for the poor, the aged, and the sick; he observes, that at Strasburg a sort of generous munificence reigns in regard to all the miserable; and when he has seen Spain, he could only say, in general, that it abounds in charitable institutions.‡

* Histoire Critique de Nicholas Flamel, et de Pernille, sa Femme. † Cant. viii.

‡ Duchesne, Antiquités des Villes de France, tom. ii. 316.

§ De Bourgueville, les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, liv. ii. 22.

* Bell's Observations on Italy.

† Hurter, Geschichte Innocenz III., book 2.

‡ Howard on the State of Hospitals, &c.

What a delightful object is that great hospital of San Juan-Baptista, placed in such a beautiful situation, at a short distance from the city of Toledo! This house was built by an archbishop in a style of royal magnificence, having vast corridors, noble staircases, and halls, accommodated for the seasons of winter and summer. The hospital of mercy at Lisbon is so richly supported by the charity of pious men, that the number of persons annually relieved seems almost incredible. It is depending wholly on fortuitous alms, and served by the brothers of mercy. Here portions are given to young maidens to enable them to marry; persons of decayed fortune are assisted according to their wants, and whatever money is collected must always be expended within the year. More than twenty-four thousand gold ducats are annually given to the poor, and in some years the alms have exceeded forty thousand ducats. Here too, the sick and infirm are received, as also foundlings. The whole is under the invocation of All Saints: it is built in a magnificent style, divided into four cloisters, with sweet gardens and thirty-four porches. The sick, on their recovery, are each presented with money sufficient to support them during many days after leaving the hospital. The benignity of all who serve in it is such as cannot be exceeded.* Speaking of the king's hospital at Burgos, a French writer remarks, that the Spaniards could give lessons to the most civilized nations on these monuments of charity. A cruel foresight, he says, does not render them afraid, lest the unhappy should find themselves so well treated as to view, without repugnance, these asylums opened to their misery.† The same traveller observes, that the establishments of charity at Madrid are sufficient to entitle it to a first rank among the capitals of Europe. The hospitals and confraternities are all on the most generous scale. He does not inform his reader of the origin of the great hospital at Burgos, the history of which, however can throw some light upon the mystery of the difference which he remarks between the mercy of former ages and the beneficence of the present day; for this hospital, as also the convent of Holgis, had wholly a religious origin, being founded by Alfonso VIII. after his defeat at Alarcos, who desired in this manner to acknowledge his

sins, and testify his repentance; to which pious works the great and renowned victory of the Navas de Tolosa, which was gained shortly after, has been ascribed by the Spanish writers. In the great hospital of Toledo are six vast noble pictures of the school of Rubens. The Hospital of Charity, at Seville, contains ten of the finest paintings of Murillo, which are the admiration of all connoisseurs. The hospital of Cadiz is another magnificent establishment enriched with works of art. "I have been astonished," says Bourgoign, "and edified at the cleanness and order which distinguish all these institutions in Spain; and I have often admired how this devotion, this Christian charity, which in our age we imagine we treat with indulgence, when we only cover it with ridicule; how, I say, this principle can render men different from themselves, and take from them their most inveterate defects. In the pious foundations of the Spaniards there is no trace of apathy, or indolence, or filth."*

We can learn the state of the Italian hospitals in the sixteenth century from the mouth of a great adversary. "In Italy," says Luther, "the hospitals are well provided, well built; the best food is given; there are attentive servants, and skilful physicians; the beds and the clothes are very clean; the interior of the building is adorned with fine pictures. When a sick person is brought in, his own clothes are taken from him, in presence of a notary, who writes down an exact description, that they may be restored to him. He is clad in a white dress, and placed in a well-made bed, in white sheets. Two physicians visit him, and the servants wait upon him with the food prescribed. Then come to him also ladies and honourable matrons, who take the veil during some days to serve the poor; so that no one knows who they are, and then they return home. At Florence also I have seen the hospitals well served with all care. In like manner the houses for foundlings, where the little children have the best nourishment, instruction, and education."† The care even to adorn with magnificence the asylums of the poor and wretched was conspicuous from the first. If it were not for the name of the *Albergo Dei Poveri*, one might suppose that this vast institution at Genoa, which was founded by a member of the

* Damiani a Goetz Olisoponis Descriptio.
† Bourgoign, *Tableau de l'Espagne*, i. 40.

* *Tableau de l'Espagne*, tom. iii. 17.
† Michelet, *Mém. de Luth.* ii.

Brignoli family, to serve as an asylum for upwards of a thousand persons, from old age or other causes reduced to want, had been intended to serve as a palace for princes. It is impossible to behold this vast edifice, magnificent as a royal residence, without being forcibly struck with the splendour of Catholic charity. The church attached to it is vast and beautiful, and contains an exquisite work by Michael Angelo. In the entrance hall are colossal statues, in marble, of the charitable nobles and ladies who have endowed the Albergo at different times: the figure of the founder receiving a poor boy, whose ragged clothes are represented in the marble, though certainly not a masterpiece of art, is enough to draw tears, such an expression of mercy and Christian tenderness characterizes the whole group. The figure of a noble dame of the Palavicini family pouring forth her money into the treasury of the hospital, is another striking piece of art in this hall. There is also at Genoa an institution supported and conducted by the Fiesco family, in which eight hundred female children are lodged, and taught to work at some trade, and each receives a thousand francs when she marries. It was Bartholomew Bosco who, in the year 1423, founded the great hospital De Pammatone, in the same city. Here are seventy-five statues of benefactors. Hector Vernassa founded another on a scale of almost equal magnificence. Superb and numerous as are the private palaces of the Genoese, the asylums of the indigent strike the imagination of a stranger, whose eyes, though bent on view of novel sights, cannot refuse to turn to their allurements. The people have not to penetrate into the houses of the Dorias, the Brigniolis, and Durassas, to behold the noblest works of art; they will find the sublimest paintings and imagery in sculpture, the master-pieces of Michael Angelo himself, where think you? in the hostel of the poor. Among the gifts of Pope Innocent III. to the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome we read of precious treasures, ornaments, and books.* Again, at Florence, the façade of the vast hospital of Santa Maria Novella, which was founded in 1287 by Folco Portinari, father of the Beatrice immortalized by Dante, was designed by no less distinguished an artist than Buontalenti, and is the admiration of all beholders. In the same city the hospital founded by Bonifacio Lupi contains paintings by the first artists. In the great hospital at Sienna you

find ancient paintings of various saints, patriarchs, and prophets, so full of merit that Pinturicchio and Raffaello did not disdain to study them.

At Venice you have the same union of mercy and magnificence. One might suppose in this city that it was pity and love of the poor which had inspired and nourished the arts. If you wish to see paintings by Piloti, Palma, and Bellino, you must repair to the hospice of St. Job and of St. John the Baptist. Are you attracted by Peranda, Mazzenio, and Carlo Lotti? You must visit the hospital for poor foundlings. If you follow Caelesti, Stroifi, Reinerio, Mazza, Ruschi, and Perugino, you must pass to the hospital of Saints John and Paul, where are received the sick, and the orphan, and the stranger. To see the picture of Liberi, representing the seven works of mercy, and innumerable masterpieces, or, on festivals, to hear the celebrated music, which attracts all Venice, you must condescend to enter the house of St. Lazarus, for beggars, where five hundred of these poor persons are nourished, whose daughters are the musicians that will perform it. If you ask for the painting of St. Ursula, by Tintoret, or that of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, by Varori, or many others of the first artists, you are referred to the hospital of Incurables, or to the hospice of poor maidens, or to the house of convertites for penitent women.*

Nor is this munificence in pity confined to Italy. The hospital of St. John the Evangelist at Bruges, which faces the portal of the church of our Lady in the street of St. Catharine, is an edifice of no less beauty than antiquity. In the chapel is the shrine of St. Ursula, adorned with miniature pictures, representing the history of the saint, and scenes from the Apocalypse, exquisitely painted by Hemmelink, the disciple of Van-Eyck, whose colours remain as pure and brilliant as if they had been laid on but yesterday. In the council-chamber of the hospital is a large picture of St. John, painted by the same artist.

The magnificence of the hospital at Quenoy, in Flanders, used to be a theme of admiration with all travellers in that country. This house was founded by a chaplain of Baldwin the Brave, tenth Count of Flanders; and it was rebuilt on the present scale in 1233 by Jane, Countess of Hainaut, and richly endowed by her sister and heiress,

* Gesta, lnn. III. 144.

* Splend. Venet. in Theat. Antiq. Italica, tom. v.

the Countess Marguerite, who placed in it nuns of the order of St. Augustin.*

Notwithstanding the splendour and beauty of these great institutions, it is important to remark that in no instance could one discover, in their plan or administration, a sacrifice of utility to vanity or caprice. They were always so constituted as to present the most prompt and efficacious relief that the case required; whereas, in the foundations of later times, the true order of charity is far from being preserved with the same uniformity. St. Victor remarks, that the hospital of the Invalides at Paris, constructed by Louis XIV., was more pompous than useful. At half the expense the soldiers could have been rendered much more happy, each in his native village.†

But what was still more worthy of attention than any thing yet noticed in the hospitals and other institutions of mercy, in the middle ages, was the singular ingenuity evinced by their founders and benefactors in their plans and modes of administration, and in the art with which they proposed to meet all possible circumstances of human misery, and to further the great end of yielding both corporal and spiritual assistance.

To consider, in the first instance, a case which presented the greatest difficulty, let us pause a moment to view the hospitals for lepers, of which we have already had occasion to speak. These were generally built at the entrance of cities and towns, totally separated from places inhabited, and each city and even village was bound to take charge of its own lepers. At Paris there were three hospitals for these unhappy persons. Matthew Paris says, that there were in his time nineteen thousand houses of that kind in Christendom, which is not incredible, since we read of Louis VIII., in 1225, bequeathing a hundred sous to each of the two thousand lazarettos in his kingdom.‡

In England there was large provision made for lepers. There was an hospital for women afflicted with that disease in the diocese of Lincoln, a noble one near Durham, three in London, and perhaps many more near our great cities.

In the year 789 Charlemagne had expressly prohibited lepers from holding any communication with the people, and during 907 years this police subsisted in France. In 1693, when the disease disappeared,

Louis XIV. ordered that the leproseries should be in future united with the other hospitals.

Hospitals for foundlings cannot be traced to such an early period, and the explanation of this fact might lead to many very important reflections. Infanticide and exposition of children, which had been sanctioned in all the ancient states, were in a gradual but no less miraculous manner abolished by the Catholic religion in ages of faith. In early times the Christian women offered themselves as nurses to preserve the abandoned infants of the pagans, while the fathers of the Church denounced the inhumanity of such parents with an admirable eloquence.* By degrees, the principle which they inculcated produced its effect upon the civil government; though the number of expositions only diminished in proportion to the propagation of the faith. Constantine, by his remarkable and greatly misrepresented law, permitting parents to sell their new-born children, which was a revocation of the edicts of Diocletian and Maximian, provided against the greater evil of infanticide by sanctioning the lesser, which, in fact, only amounted to the consignment of children to a domestic servitude.† Succeeding emperors secured the lot of foundlings, by permitting those who had nourished them to use them as their servants. But Justinian declared that in future such children should enjoy the whole rights of free citizens, concluding with this admirable sentence, "Man ought not to fulfil a duty of charity because he reckons upon a salary." By this time, however, the Christian Church had established a great empire in the minds of men, so that from day to day the number of expositions became sensibly less and less. Pious foundations were made, manners were reformed, chastity was honoured, and the emperors had abolished the penalties against celibacy, by which blind paganism had hoped to favour population. Christianity had partly dried up the two great sources of evil in society—immorality and misery; so that from the sixth to the fifteenth century there is scarcely a question raised respecting foundlings. One discovers only here and there the trace of some rare public establishment in their favour,—as when Pope Innocent III. is related to have been moved to build and endow a hospital for foundlings on hearing that a fisherman of the Tiber

* Les Delices des Pais bas, tom. i.

† Tableau de Paris, tom. iv. 80.

‡ De la Motte, Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu.

* Tertul. Apolog. c. ix.

† Lallier, du Pauperisme.

had found three drowned children in his net. Private charity was sufficient to provide for the wants of society. Scarcely in the whole body of canon law do we find a single passage concerning foundlings. In regard to their baptism there is an allusion to them in the decrees of the council of York, held in 1197, under Pope Celestin III., and by the council of Arles in 389; as also in two capitularies, the one of Childeric III., in 744, and the other of Charlemagne: the limits of time are fixed after which no one must reclaim a foundling. Besides these, Lallier, in his Essay on Pauperism, declares that he knows of no other instance. In the eleventh century, there is mention, however, of some persons too poor to nourish their children, who used to place them at the doors of the church, with the expectation of their being taken up by the clergy, and nourished in a hospital for the purpose, where they would be educated.* In the twelfth century, poor people in Prussia, in extreme necessity, used sometimes to place their infants at the doors of the hospitals of the Teutonic order, and these foundlings were then baptized and provided with nurses. In later times, by bulls of many popes, the institution of hospitals for this express purpose was recommended.† At Naples foundlings used to be received and adopted voluntarily, even by poor people, and were then called children of our Lady, figli della Madonna. The place for their reception at Padua in the sixteenth century, was called "The House of God."‡ In the foundling hospital at Lisbon Howard found ninety children, but still most of them were of Moorish parents. Albert the Great, when Legate of the Holy See in Poland, abolished the inhuman custom which had prevailed in those barbarous regions, of killing all children that were born with any defect, or that their parents could not nourish. Howard mentions, that at the time when he writes, infanticide is common in Denmark, though he neglects to remark that the preventive had been removed with the Catholic faith. From the year 1180 infants exposed were received into the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Montpellier. The foundling hospitals at Paris date from 1638, and owe their origin to the indefatigable zeal of St. Vincent de Paul. Before that year we find this work of mercy devolving upon devout widows, whose means in early times had proved

adequate to the task. But the new instructors had now been heard of in most lands. When Tenou wrote his *Memoirs*, the foundling hospital at Paris contained three hundred and ninety-six children, and nourished besides in the country fifteen thousand. In the space of one hundred and seventeen years this hospital received two hundred and fifty-three thousand, three hundred children. It is a remarkable fact that this number has successively increased, and particularly from the year 1741, in which year alone the number received amounted to three thousand, three hundred and eighty, which was nearly the same as had been admitted during the ten preceding years. At the present day, the great problem of the social science is to determine the method of diminishing the increasing number of exposed children. The fall of society is so profound that no one could credit it, if it were not attested by official documents. Such has been the result of renouncing the faith and manners of Catholicism, which had reconstituted human society with such admirable success during so many ages, appearing to have justified the conviction of philosophers that the evils of the ancient world were extirpated for ever.

The need of other institutions, which the crimes and consequent miseries of men have added, in later times, to the heavy list of social wants, had then been experienced but in slight measure. A single tower would formerly suffice to inclose the madmen of a whole country; and so little did the discipline maintained within it resemble that which has so long disgraced the great asylums, as they are denominated, of modern states, that those who approached it at the evening hour might hear the bell which called the maniacs to vespers. Insanity was a rare phenomenon in the ages which we survey. Modern writers acknowledge the afflicting truth, that what they term "the progress of civilization and the growing complication of human affairs," phrases which every Catholic, ascetically wise, will easily understand, have added largely to the numbers of the insane in any given population. This was, therefore, almost a new field thrown open to the blessed merciful; and at Caen, and in many other cities, we may behold the happy results of their solicitude in our times, their exhaustless patience, and benignant care to make it fruitful.

But, to return to the middle ages, and survey the general foundations which then existed. Besides the great institutions for common wants, there were numberless hos-

* Landolph. *Mediolanens. Hist. Lib. ii. cap. 35.*

† Voigt *Geschichte Preussens*, ii. 117. Muratori, *Antiq. Ital.* iii. 592.

‡ Bern. Scard. de *Antiq. Pat. ii. 5.*

pitals designed with subtle charity for some less prominent object. Thus there were hospitals richly endowed for the convalescent alone, who had left the houses of the sick. At Paris we met with legacies of pious persons to support a hospital of this kind, in which women, on leaving the Hôtel Dieu might be received during at least three days and nights.* Amyot, in his youth being confined with a sickness in the Hôtel Dieu at Orleans, received from it on going out a sum of money to enable him to continue his journey, in consideration of which he left by his testament twelve hundred crowns to that hospital. In the hospital of convalescents at Paris workmen and artisans were received during eight days, and had liberty to go out each day, in search of employment. In that capital there were no less than twenty hospitals for the poor who were in health, for old men, for widows, for orphans, for strangers, and for wandering youth. Similar establishments were in other cities.

Part of the convent of St. Joseph at Florence is inhabited by the children of refuge of St. Philip Neri, instituted in 1650 by Philip Franci, to receive and educate boys of bad manners, from the age of sixteen years, where they are taught some useful art by which they may maintain themselves. At Bologna there was erected, in 1355, a house of charity, to receive men converted from a spirit of blasphemy, the origin of which is thus related:—A certain man having lost money at play, uttered imprecations against the blessed Virgin, before whose image in Porta, which is in the centre of the city, he had been playing. Immediately he was seized with spasms in all his limbs, and blindness, and in that state carried to the hospital; on hearing of which event fifteen young men, conscious of having often sinned in the same manner, resolved to amend their lives, and, renouncing all earthly things, obtained permission from the Bishop, John de Naso, to build this house for themselves and others who might join them, where they assumed a monastic habit.† In Florence the institution for women converted was entitled Malmaritate. It was the custom to oblige persons of dissolute lives to assist in the cathedral at a sermon, on the Thursday of the fifth week in Lent, in which the horror of their state was represented. In order to receive such as were converted, this charitable institution

was founded under the invocation of St. Mary Magdalen.

Monteil acknowledges the admirable conversions which were made in the great institutions of the middle ages for the support of penitent women. Religion, he says, had purified their soul and their heart. I read with delight this article of the expense of the Provost—"Aux pauvres filles pénitentes, dix livres parisis, en pitié et aumosne, pour avoir du pain, dont elles ont grand nécessité et souffrette."* The description which Bernardine Scardeoneo, in the sixteenth century, gives of the similar institution at Padua, is affecting. This house, saith he, styled "Of the Illuminated and Converted Women," was instituted by a holy priest, Francis Zaghio. It adjoins the church of St. Sophia, and is conducted by devout nuns. Here there are at present forty of these poor penitents, acknowledging their error, who have fled here of their own accord, as if to an asylum; here they live by the labour of their hands, and by the alms of the pious; they are taught to read, and to sing diurnal and nocturnal offices, which they perform with such piety that I do not believe any monks of the strictest observance can surpass them: so that here we behold verified what is said in the Gospel, that the harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God, while Scribes and Pharisees are cast out.† At Bologna, also, it was in consequence of hearing that a number of such victims would, of their own accord, take refuge in a house of penitence, if such an asylum were provided for them, that the Bishop, John Campegius, persuaded the citizens to erect one in 1551.‡

It was Henry III., the king of simple life and plain, as Dante styles him, who founded the hospital or religious house of converts, in Chancery-lane, in London, which is now known by the name of the Rolles, "ad sustentationem Fratrum conversorum, et convertendorum de Judaismo ad fidem Catholicam." There was a similar house at Rome, founded by Pius V., and also a college, founded by Gregory XIII. for the express purpose of receiving such Jews as desired to be instructed in the Christian religion. At Venice, also, the piety of the state had provided a church and hospice, to receive Jews on their conversion, as also converts from the Turke.§ The Jews, on

* Tenon, *Mém. sur les Hôpitaux*.
† Sigonii, *De Ep. Bonon. Lib. iii.*

* *Antiq. de Paris, par Sauval. Comptes de la Prévôte, année 1503 et 1510.*

† *Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patavii, Lib. ii. cap.*

5.

‡ *Sigonii De Ep. Bonon. Lib. v.*

§ *Spend. Venet. in Thea. Antiq. Ital. v.*

their conversion, were not only to be watered with the dew of doctrine, as Pope Innocent III. said, but also to be nourished with temporal benefits.* Lest the shame of poverty, which they are not accustomed to bear with equanimity, should compel them to look back, all the faithful, he says, must bear assistance to them; and there is a grand letter of the same pontiff to the Bishop of Autun, who had neglected to relieve the wants of a certain converted Jew and his daughter, and for having neglected or despised attending to the apostolic mandate to that effect.† By the persuasion of a nobleman, a certain Jew in Leicester had been induced to renounce all the riches which he possessed, and receive baptism to follow Christ. As long as this nobleman lived the convert was well supported, but, after his death, he was left without means of subsistence; whereupon the same pontiff wrote to the abbot and convent of St. Mary of the Fields, at Leicester, commanding them for the sake of Him by whom he received the light of truth, to supply him in future with all things necessary.‡ In later times there was occasion to provide for convertites of another description, and accordingly there was an establishment in Gex, founded by St. Francis de Sales, and another in Paris, founded by a virtuous ecclesiastic, to receive persons from the ranks of false reform, who were newly converted to the Catholic faith, and whose Protestant relations and friends had abandoned them on their conversion.§ To lead weak mortals from temptation, and to deliver them from moral danger, while assisting their corporal necessities, there were institutions expressly established. For this purpose, at Rheims, there was the hospital of St. Catherine, to give lodging and bread during one night to all women who should present themselves at the gate.|| At Paris, in the hospital of St. Catherine, in the street of St. Denis, at the corner of that of Lombards, the nuns of St. Augustin used to give hospitality with the same intention during three nights, to poor women who were in search of service, and to such as came from the country about business. This house could receive as many as sixty-nine guests.¶

But it would be in vain to think of enumerating all the cunningly devised and generously supported institutions, to which

blessed mercy gave birth. If we desired to visit all that existed in one city alone, we should be at a loss to determine whither we should direct our steps. Witness, for example, the city of Milan, in which were constantly open such a multitude of doors to receive not merely the poor, and sick, and miserable, but even all who might have been in danger of becoming such, to whom every kind of assistance was supplied by noble laics, under the guidance of priests.* Who could describe the houses of choice mercy in any great Catholic city in the middle ages? And yet, after all, men were not satisfied with these. Every private door was open to the stranger poor. At Ghent, before the revolution, there was a house in which half an ox was boiled every day, and given to all who came. This was called the Pot of St. Peter, and the idea of the founder was evident enough. No doubt, said he, within his own mind, there are hospitals and monasteries innumerable, where my poor fellow Christians can be relieved; yet, still, as it is possible that there may be some wandering wretch, whom peculiar circumstances may prevent from applying to them, let there be a feast daily to which all may come, and a dish to which every hungry man may stretch a hand. At Madrid there was a charitable brotherhood called La Hermandad del Refugio, the members of which used to repair every morning to a chamber in the hospital of San Antonio, whence they set out to perambulate the streets of the city, announcing their passage by striking the pavement with a stick loaded with iron. All the poor and wretched persons that they met were conducted by them to this hospital, where they were given soup and eggs, a bed for the night, and a breakfast next morning of bread and dried grapes.† There were at Paris and Rouen twenty-four chambers, entitled "Of Franks Bourgeois," where the poor were lodged gratis, and presented with thirteen farthings on entering, and one farthing each week, with permission to beg through the city.‡ There were also the chambers of the twenty-five poor of St. Eustache, and those of the poor beadsmen, and that of the poor man of St. Martin.§ This last foundation was in the Abbatial chapter of St. Martin at Tours. He was fed,

* Inn. III. Epist. Lib. xvi. 84.

† Id. Lib. ii. Epist. 206.

‡ Inn. III. Lib. ii. Epist. 234.

§ St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. ii. 525.

|| Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. iv. 266.

¶ St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, i. 572.

* Italia Sacra, tom. iv. 26.

† Howard, State of Hospitals.

‡ Monteil, Hist. des François. Amiot, Hist. de Rouen, tom. i. chap. des Cordeliers. Antiq. de Paris, par Sauval, liv. ii.

§ Lettres des Rois Mars, 1472, relative to the foundation du pauvre de Saint-Martin de Tours.

and clothed, and lodged, and had a place in all solemn processions. At Paris, by the church of Notre Dame, there was always a long bench, on which charitable people used to deposit the garments that they wished to give to the poor.*

There were donations, as we have seen, with the sole view of contributing to the pleasures and solace of the convalescent poor, and the generous spirit in which these were conceived is very remarkable. In the grant of Adam, who gave two houses to the hospital of the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris, in 1199, there is a condition enjoined, that on his anniversary, such persons as are sick in the house shall be provided with whatever kind of food they may please to ask for, provided it can be procured anywhere. "Ea conditione, quod ægrotantibus quicquid cibarium in eorum venerit desiderio, si tamen posset inveniri, de totali proventu domorum in die anniversarii ejus detur."†

In the twelfth century the statutes of the merchant silversmiths ordained, that they should give a dinner on Easter-day to the patients of the same hospital; and it is related, that at this banquet the service was always performed by their wives, who were to repair to the hospital pompously dressed.‡ In this hospital there are certain lesser wards contiguous to the greater, which are reserved for the accommodation of such persons as fall sick in the service of the poor, and also of individuals in a distressed state, to whom a peculiar respect is due, and who can thus feel themselves isolated and unobserved, a delicate contrivance of Catholic charity that should not be passed by unnoticed.§ There is a class of persons unwilling to have recourse to a public hospital, and yet without sufficient means to procure assistance in their own homes, and for these there is a house of health in the suburb of St. Lawrence in the same capital.|| At Florence the hospital of St. Paul was destined exclusively to receive and entertain, during four days, the convalescent who came there from other hospitals before resuming their occupations. Hugh de Trotescline, abbot of St. Austin at Canterbury, in the reign of Henry I. founded a hospital near his own abbey, to the honour of Christ and St. Lawrence, for the reception of sick monks; and also, he adds, if it should so happen that the

father, mother, sister, or brother of any monk of this monastery should come to such great want as that, to the reproach of any of these brethren, he or she be forced to ask at the gates the alms of the fraternity, that then such of them so asking should be provided for in this asylum. The superb hospital of Ciudad Real was built by an archbishop of Toledo, to receive such of his poor diocesans as might be scattered through la Mancha. At Paris, the hospital for the support of three hundred blind men, dates from the year 1260.

All these triumphs of intelligence in the service of charity, which excite so much admiration at present, can be traced to the spirit, and often to the instrumentality, of the holy inhabitants of cloisters, who still continue, as they have ever been, at the head of every work that can alleviate human sorrows, as may be witnessed in that learned and humble monk Octavius Assarotti, who founded the institution of the deaf and dumb at Genoa. The union of hospitality and mercy which reigned in those hospices of the middle age, which we before visited in company with the pilgrims, formed a delightful feature in the ancient manners, on which I cannot refrain from dwelling a little. These also had their commencement in the bishop's house, as we may infer from these lines of Fortunatus, describing St. Magnericus, Archbishop of Treves:—

*Te panem esuriens, tectum hospes, nudus amictum,
Te fessus requiem, spem peregrinus habet.*

The bishop's house was adjoining the church but we may learn what was its simplicity in early times from the word "unguriolum," used by the African fathers in describing it.* With what mercy the stranger was received in these humble dwellings may be conceived from the character which the same poet ascribes to Leontius II. Archbishop of Bourdeaux, of whom he says:—

*Susceptor peregrum distribuendo cibum.
Longius extremo si quis properasset ab orbe,
Advena mox vidit, hunc ait esse patrem.*

Accordingly in the commencement there was no distinction of separate houses for the pilgrim and the sick, but as at Paris, the one house of God was established for both. The motto of the Hôtel Dieu was "Medicus et hospes." At any hour of the day and night pilgrims and other persons who asked

* Lebeuf, Hist. de la Ville et du Diocèse de Paris, tom. i. chap. 1.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. c. i.

‡ Notice, Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu. § Id. 23.

|| Clavereau, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

* Gallia Christiana.

hospitality were received there, and all these individuals might remain till they chose to leave it to pursue their journey; nor was there any rule to oblige the patients to depart on their recovery.* Pope Innocent III. subjected his great hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome to the same obligation.† The hostels exclusively for hospitality, which were so multiplied in the middle ages, exhibited generally some image or painting of St. Julian, for this celebrated convertite had renounced the world with his wife, and built a hut in a forest, where they gave lodging and food to all strangers, only asking them in return to pray for the souls of his father and mother, whom he had slain in an access of fury, supposing that he had surprised an adulterer on finding them one night as he returned from hunting, in his own bed, where they had been placed by his wife during his absence, their arrival being unknown to him. The kind, old, unpretending hospice is certainly a most interesting monument of those ages of mercy.

"Here comes a pilgrim," says a citizen, whom Shakspeare represents standing at his door; "I know he will lie at my house; thither they send one another. God save you, pilgrim; whither are you bound? To St. Jacques-le-Grand. Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you?" You perceive there was generally a place especially provided for them. Thus at Evreux was the hospital of St. James for pilgrims to Compostello. There were similar hospices at Bourdeaux, and in most cities of Europe. That at Blois was founded by the charitable Louis de Chastillon, count of Blois, and by some private persons who had compassion on the pilgrims of St. James. In Paris the hospice of St. James, which we before visited, was particularly celebrated; but other poor men, strangers and passengers in that capital, had their rendezvous at the hospice of St. Gervais in the old street of the Temple, served by nuns of St. Augustin, who gave them lodging and supper during three nights; and one hundred strangers, on an average, were lodged here.‡ In Brussels similarly there were many small hospices for pilgrims and travellers, which gave them lodging and entertainment during three days.§ At Catana the senate deemed it a matter of public importance

that ample provision should be made for giving hospitality to every poor stranger in the Xenodochium in the house of St. Euplus.* Bernardine Scardeoneo says, that before the sixteenth century, when the number of penitents was greater, there was in Padua, as in other cities, two hospices at each of the gates, one within, the other without the walls, so that the number at Padua amounted to twenty-four, of which none remained when he wrote but those of St. Leoline, of the Holy Cross, of St. James, and of St. Anthony, all which were religiously conducted by a confraternity of devout laics: the swine belonging to the hospice of St. Anthony were marked, and allowed to run about the city.†

Vincent de Beauvais, in treating upon architecture, as adapted to the different kinds of houses, alludes to the Xenodochium, to receive strangers and poor people from the roads:‡ these were thickly scattered far and wide over Europe. Malta first of all the regions of the earth had the honour to give a hospitable reception to the poor of Christ in the person of St. Paul and his companions when shipwrecked, and its prince, Publius, was their first benefactor; here consequently, in early times, arose a great convent and house of hospitality for pilgrims.§ But on the wildest and most inhospitable borders were similar institutions found. Thus in Orderic Vitalis we read, that there was on the frontier of the territories of Bavaria and the Huns an honourable hospital which faithful and powerful Christians of the neighbouring provinces had founded, to receive the poor and pilgrims. A Norman, named Angot, was their chief: he had borne arms under Richard and Robert, dukes of Normandy; but, moved by the fear of God, he abandoned the world, and preferred, for the love of Christ, pilgrimage and voluntary poverty all his life. Here all travellers were entertained for some days.|| Celebrated in England were the foundations of William of Wyckam, of which the hospice of the Holy Cross at Winchester remains a solitary vestige. The Maison Dieu, at Dover, was also a magnificent institution, in which pilgrims and all poor strangers arriving from the continent were lodged and entertained gratuitously. To this house was attached a

* Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 10.

† Inn. III. Epist. liv. x. 179.

‡ Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux; et Duchesne, Antiquités des Villes de France, tom. i. 82.

§ Les Delices des Pays bas.

* De Grossis Catanens. Decachord. ii. 16. Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiquit. Patavii, Lib. ii. cap. 5.

‡ Speculum Doctrinale, Lib. x. 20.

§ Sicilia Sacra, tom. ii. 903.

|| Hist. Norman. Lib. iii.

fine park, the grey mouldering walls of which can still be traced, and a noble church. The interior of this venerable pile has lately undergone a total change, in order to receive henceforth prisoners condemned to solitary confinement, for whom have been constructed lightsome cells, such as are seen in the garden of the king at Paris, where wild and savage animals are kept for show; a different hospitality in sooth from what was once established here. At Lille, too, there were hospitals in which all the poor who passed by were fed, warmed, and lodged during three days; and when there were not sufficient beds, there were great coverings called bayards, which served to warm several together. Monteil cites the act of the foundation of the hospital of St. Julien, in 1321, which ordains that in the said house there shall be perpetually sixteen beds well stuffed, and two great beds called bayards. Poor modest citizens had prebends of this hospital, which entitled them to receive corn and money every week.

The celebrated hospital of the Holy Ghost at Dijon is the subject of a curious and elaborate history, illustrated by miniatures, and divided into centuries. In the fifteenth century it is said, that there are seventy beds for the sick in the entrance hall, that the other apartments were full of beds and cradles for poor travellers and old people and children, that endless alms used to be distributed by hand at the gates, and that in 1434, in consequence of the public calamities, there were fifteen thousand people received there. It was served by nuns habited in black, and bearing a white cross on the breast. Celebrated among these was sister Angèle, who died in 1459, in the odour of sanctity. Monteil describes the vast number of hospices for the poor and for strangers, which existed in France down to the eighteenth century. In each of these houses the poor were received at least for a day, so that they travelled free of expense. This historian refers to the ancient coutumes of Tours, and to various chronicles of towns.*

These houses acquired often a great interest from the eminent sanctity of the guests whom they had received. Thus the hospice of Genoa became so venerable for having sheltered St. Lawrence on his way from Spain, that soon after his martyrdom

it was converted into a church; and at Florence the hospice near the church of St. Lucia, on the banks of the Arno, was distinguished for having been the house in which, at different times, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Dominick, on their coming to that city, had been received to hospitality. The images of these blessed saints were placed over the door of this house, as a memorial of the fact; and as this old sculpture represented them in the habit which they really wore, it was considered peculiarly precious.*

Cardinal Peter, in 1213, seeing the immense multitude of people that resorted to the cathedral of St. Andrew at Amalphi, erected and endowed a hospice near it, to receive the pilgrims.† With a similar intention Lanfranc built houses in Canterbury, for the reception and entertainment of the stranger poor.

The great hospice for pilgrims of St. Michael, of Mount Gargano, at Siponti, is a monument of the charity of Cardinal Orsini, during his government of that church. This great man, when translated to Beneventum, twice rebuilt, after its destruction by earthquakes, and furnished with every necessary, a similar house in that city, in which all poor strangers were lodged and nourished, during three days. This holy Cardinal and Archbishop, who afterwards ruled the universal Church, as Benedict XIII., used, on certain days every week, to visit this hospice, and serve these poor guests at table.‡

About the year 1120, Alard, viscount of Flanders, built in Auvergne a hospice and monastery, on a high mountain, which is covered with snow and clouds during eight months of the year. Here the monks were to receive all travellers. Similar houses existed on the passes of the Alps, by the great and little St. Bernard and St. Gothard.

The Emperor Frederick, in the year 1160, speaks as follows: "Since we are bound to render an account before the tribunal of Christ, if by the improvidence of our government any men should perish, and there is no greater benefit in this world than to erect fountains and hospitals in desert places, and especially on Alps, where the servants of God are in habits of passing; therefore let all the faithful of Christ know that, for the love of Jesus Christ and for the safety of our souls, we have taken the

* Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, an. 1211.

† Italia Sacra, tom. vii. 216.

‡ Touron, *Hist. des. Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. vi. liv. 43.

* Antiq. d'Anjou, par Jean Hiert; l'Hist. d'Amiens, par le Père d'Aire; l'Hist. de Rouen, par Amiot.

Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary de Crispino, under our especial protection, to be independent of all states and nobles."* Similar hospices were on the passes of the Pyrenees. The Cardinal of Bourbon, returning from conducting the unfortunate Elizabeth into Spain, stopped at the hospice of Roncevaux. He sat down at table with three hundred travellers, to each of whom he gave three reals, to assist them in continuing their journey.

The poet Spenser flourished so shortly after the change of religion in England, that he must have been able to paint from memory when he represents the hospice by the way:—

"Eftsoones unto an holy hospitall
That was foreby the way, she did him bring,
In which seven bead-men, that had vowed all
Their life to service of high heaven's King,
Did spend their daies in doing godly thing :
Their gates to all were open ever more,
That by the wearie way were travelling,
And one sate wayting ever them before,
To call in commers-by, that needy were and pore."†

There were in many cities hospices for the gratuitous entertainment of persons of particular nations. Thus the Anglo-Saxons had their hospice in Rome, the inhabitants of Lyons theirs in Avignon, and the Austrians theirs at Madrid; for the hospital of San Antonio, in that city, was originally destined to lodge and nourish during three days, poor travellers of that country.

It was not, however, merely in the foundation of hospices on the roads, that the action of mercy, in regard to travellers in the middle age, was seen. The erection and maintenance of bridges and causeways, to avoid desperate passes, full of danger, must be ascribed to the same principle, as the details respecting them in our ancient histories will demonstrate.

Accordingly, Reginbert, bishop of Passau, in 1144, for the remedy of his soul, desiring to benefit the community in the most efficacious manner possible, builds a bridge over the river Oen, whose impetuous flood had often endangered men and goods; and as the toll of the ferry belonged to the canons regular of St. Nicholas there, fearing to incur sin by injuring them, he gives in compensation for the toll, a church of Hartkirch, that the bridge may be free to every one. Near that bridge he builds also, for the love of heaven, an asylum for the poor, a hostel for pilgrims, including

a church in honour of the victorious cross of Christ, and he appoints Udalricus, a priest, to superintend the bridge and hostel, and to all who give alms in furtherance of the work he grants an indulgence.* In the monastery of Burton, there was a prior named John of Streton, a man of great authority and of eminent learning. He obtained leave from the abbot to employ all the property of his father and mother on their death, for the benefit of their souls, in building the bridge of Egenton over the waters of the Done, which he did, and mercifully sustained the said bridge for a long time. After his death, the inhabitants of Egenton, in 1255, pretending not to know that this had all been done through charity, asserted that the Abbot of Burton ought to repair the bridge for ever; thus converting grace and alms into obligation. Therefore, Abbot Lawrence, who was then head of the monastery, sent letters to the king's courts, and an inquisition was instituted before chosen men of Staffordshire, who gave their verdict that the bridge had always been maintained through charity, by alms, and not by obligation of law.†

Portuguese writers attest that the bridge over the Minho, between Rivadaria and Orense, of which the passage had been always very dangerous, was built either by St. Peter Gonçalez or by the blessed Gonçalez d'Amaranthe.‡ The latter was a holy man, who, from being a curate, became a pilgrim to the holy land, on his return, a hermit, and finally a Dominican friar; but so great were the services which he had rendered to the rustics while inhabiting his hermitage, in instructing and exhorting them to gain heaven, that the fathers, after admitting him into the order, charging him to resume his apostolic labours in that wild and sequestered valley. At first a few huts were thrown up round his cell, but by degrees so many were added, that a village was the result, which was the origin of the present town of Amarantha. The passage of the river Tamaga, which flowed by it, was very dangerous in winter, being wild and wide in some places, and very deep and rapid in others. Nevertheless the peasants on the opposite side were continually in habits of risking their lives, both through desire

* Germania Sacra, tom i. 307.

† Annales Monast. Burton, Rer. Anglic. Scriptorum, tom. i. 303.

‡ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.

* Italia Sacra, tom. i. 498.

† I. 10.

of hearing the hermit, and also of transacting other affairs. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the undertaking, and the assurances of prudent persons that it could not be accomplished, the holy man resolved to construct a bridge across this great river; and such confidence did he inspire in the people, that he persuaded them to cut down timber, and carry stones, with which he succeeded in constructing a solid bridge, a work which they ever afterwards continued to ascribe to the efficacy of his devout prayers.* Peter d'Alamon, bishop of Sisteron, in the thirteenth century, is recorded to have employed most of his revenues in constructing bridges and hospices throughout his diocese.†

In 1240 it was charity and faith which enabled a poor youth, acting under the prelates of the Church, to raise bridges over the Rhone at Lyons and Avignon, which was a work that had baffled the might of three of the greatest emperors of the world, —Julius Cæsar, Augustus, and Charlemagne. At Avignon may still be seen in the midst of the flood of the Rhone, three arches of the bridge which was raised in so mysterious a manner. On one of them might be distinguished a little chapel. In more ancient times the passage was very dangerous. Kings of France, and many men of genius, had vainly attempted to lay the foundations of a bridge here. It was only St. Bénézet who could succeed. The old legend says it was a boy twelve years old, guarding his mother's sheep, in the fields at Almillat, in 1242, who was commissioned, and finally instructed by an Angel, to make this bridge, which neither Cæsar, Augustus, nor Charlemagne had ventured to attempt. Mocked at first, and ejected from the city as a young Antichrist, he returned three weeks later, crying, for the love of Jesus, give me stones that I may begin building the bridge. In fine, he built it, and added a hospital at the foot of it, and then the child went to Rome and obtained indulgences from the holy father for the benefactors of the bridge and hospital. Afterwards he built a similar bridge and hospital at Lyons.‡ Finally, a society of hospitalers took charge of the work and of its repairs, though others say they had the merit of first completing what the child had only begun. The difficulty

to the incredulous moderns will remain the same, whichever tradition you follow, whether you ascribe the work to a hermit or to a child; but historical facts are not, on that account, to be set aside; and it is incontestably true, that the constructors of innumerable bridges of great solidity, having hospices annexed to them, were religious men, monks, and anchorites.* In the twelfth century there was a society of laics, on the same plan as that of the clerks Pontifices, whose objects was to facilitate the passages of rivers by boats and bridges, and their chief central place was the great hospital of St. Jacques, in the diocese of Lucca, in Italy.

But to return to the hospital, the door of charity which opens to the sick poor, as the words inscribed over that at Ferrara, define it. We have seen that, in point of magnificence and beauty, it might generally be taken for the palace of a prince, and it remains to show that, in regard to the internal administration, to the manners of those who served it, and, in short, to the whole spirit which reigned within its walls, it was, strictly speaking, a religious house, according to the definition in early times, "*Domus religiosa*," exhibiting and propagating not alone the mercy of the good Samaritan, and the assiduity of Martha, but the sanctity of the cloister, and the contemplative grace of Mary.

Hospitals like churches were placed under the invocation of saints, as that of St. Eloy, at Montpellier, of St. James, at Toulouse, of St. Andrew, at Bordeaux; and were consecrated to God in especial reference to some mystery of faith, as that of the Holy Cross at Joinville, and those at Marseilles and at Rouen, which are denominated of the Holy Ghost. Nothing of a profane or pagan character could be discerned in anything belonging to them. Their very aspect was religious; as might be witnessed in the picturesque Gothic front and portal of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, built in 1280 by Oudard Macreux, a pious citizen, for which only in late times a Grecian portico has been substituted. In fact, the ancient entry of that hospital led also to the church of St. Christopher. It was usual over the gates to represent in sculpture the Saviour holding a book, as might be seen over the Hôtel Dieu at Lagny. Howard found inscribed at the entrance of the Hôtel Dieu, at Paris, these

* Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i. † *Id. i. liv. 6.*

‡ Paradin, *Hist. de Lyons*, liv. ii. c. 43.

* D. Vaissette, *Hist. du Languedoc*, tom. iii. liv. 19. 46.

words, "This is the house of God and the gate of heaven;" the application of which he rashly ridicules, by referring to the material order of the house at that time, which was deplorable. Of this singular obliquity of vision, which more or less is evinced by all persons void of Catholic belief, when they are presented with religious truth in a form or combination new to them, the same author furnishes another instance, in styling "pompously devout" the inscription above the portal of the great hospital at Warsaw, which consists in these words—"Regi sæculorum immortalis et invisibili soli Deo honor et gloria," than which it would be hard to conceive any more appropriate at the moment when suffering mortals are about to seek human aid for the remedy of their pains. At the entrance of the Hôtel Dieu of Paris stood an image of St. Landry, the founder, carved in very ancient times. In general some devout and solemn figure was sure to meet your eye as you advanced; so that you were prepared from the beginning for what followed; and in fact I know of nothing more impressive, more soothing, and delightful, than to visit one of these great Catholic institutions. The moment after passing the threshold, one perceives that it is a different world which exists within—that every thing has changed—that time stands still—that the manners of the middle ages, the manners of the blessed merciful, are here in all their freshness; and then such a sense of peace rises up in the heart, that one almost envies the sick, who have permission to remain here awhile; for, alas! how many young men in full strength and health, how many aged persons without a positive visitation, must wish in vain to hear addressed to them such sweet voices as here whisper to the diseased? to see turned upon them such compassionate eyes as here are fixed upon the poor?

There are some, the poet saith, by nature proud, who, patient in all else, demand but this—to love and be beloved with gentleness; and being scorned, what wonder, he adds, if they die some living death? Oh, how many would rejoice to lie down this moment upon the bed of suffering, if they could but hope to see for once such proof that there were some of human kind who loved them thus, who pitied them thus! And what a rich compensation for a wound or malady in the body, to feel this wondrous balm, cheering and invigorating the intelligence, descending with the oil

of gladness into the very heart's core! And have you now seen sickness, and are these the pre-eminent sufferings of humanity? Who need be told that, contrasted with the fate of many of these victims, while treading life's dismayingly wilderness, without one smile to cheer, one voice to bless,—amid the snares and scoffs of human kind, contrasted with their condition in the world, and with what they have left behind them, when they were carried hither from the tents of sinners. this is nothing else but to breathe the air of Paradise, and to feel the peace of heaven.

The pride of learning and art may be wounded at the recollection that Camoens should have ended his days in a house of charity, and that Buonamico Buffalmacco, whose pencil left immortal traces on the Campo Santo at Pisa, should have found his grave with the poor in the cemetery of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, in Florence, in which house he died, an object himself of that mercy which he had dispensed to others, as member of the association which bears its name; but the thoughts of the sufferers may have been different from our thoughts, and their last moments sweetened by the very circumstance which we now deplore.

Independent of higher consolation, this novelty of being thus served for love must have imparted strange delight to minds like theirs, acute and profound. Such service must always impress those worn down on the way of life with a feeling as if they were brought back to the state of youth and boyhood, when their smile was taken for sufficient payment. Alas! with what precise account has every mite of service been extended to them throughout the intervening years, till this port received them! In the world the hand that was to close their eyes would have required its due remuneration. Payment would have been asked for the last morsel that was placed within their lips, and there were persons, perhaps, who would expect some profit from them after they were in their coffins. What a miraculous change must it seem now, when troops of strangers are pressing forward to render them all kinds of service, without any view to gain in ministering to their wants!

Imagine not, reader, that I am indulging in any mere ideal picture, unsupported by facts; for be assured that the scene of many affecting episodes, worthy of being by poets sung, of many beautiful and sublime conversations, religious and philo-

sophical, that would not be unworthy of the noblest pen, might with strict regard to historic truth be laid in the hospital of the middle ages. Modern writers of imaginary conversations need not go back to the Tusculan villa for a proper locality: they will find it nearer hand, in the hospice of the poor.

A great French physician, the Baron d'Alibert, speaks of a mysterious patient in the hospital of St. Louis, at Paris, who bore the name of Poor Peter, but whose real origin was known to no one, though it was evident from his language that he had received a finished education. He used to repeat by heart fragments of the Iliad and the Odyssey; and, having travelled over a great portion of the globe, it was his amusement to compare himself to Ulysses. His countenance was noble, his manner full of dignity, and the charm of his conversation attracted every one. He had been a soldier in his youth, and after his return from Africa, he used to live in the most obscure quarters of Paris, teaching arithmetic to poor children, and accepting hospitality wherever it was offered him. His clothes were in tatters, and he always carried a pilgrim's staff. The hospital of St. Louis at that time was an asylum in which many men of letters had taken refuge. This poor Peter, attended by a dog, which never left his side, being received here, soon attracted general attention; and the Baron describes the interesting discourses which he used to deliver under the porches of the hospital. Among the sufferers whom he used to console were the translator of Bacon's works, a juriconsult, some Neapolitan exiles, a poet, a painter, and some other artists. D'Alibert says that his countenance wore that venerable air which the habit of meditation gives, and that, after some days, he took such an ascendancy over all the patients, that they used to regard him with a sentiment of fear and respect. The courts of the hospital are planted with trees, and it was under their shade that this old stranger used to hold, as it were, his school, inspiring his fellow-sufferers with resignation and courage. No one was tired listening to him; the old, the blind, the paralytic, the lepers, used to gather around him; and from about sunset, when his rhapsodies generally began, they used to remain seated on the grass till a late hour of the night. Once I glided in amongst them, says this physician, and I shall never forget the scene which presented itself to me. The

heavens were sown with stars, the moon cast its silver light over the buildings around; the old man happened to be more than usually inspired—I could have fancied myself under the porch of Athens. It was delightful to hear the high sentences of wisdom from the mouth of an old man bowed down by the weight of years. A profound calm reigned through the hospital. The patients were permitted to remain listening to him, although the statutes require that they should retire to rest at determined hours. After fifteen months this venerable stranger died in the hospital, with all the sentiments of a devout Catholic. He bequeathed his dog to the poor leper, who had been always one of his most ardent disciples. His memory remained in great veneration, and as often as any patient evinced extraordinary resignation and courage, the usual remark was, he is like Poor Peter.*

From a consideration alone of the spectacle of sickness and death which a hospital presented, philosophers of the middle ages would apply to it the words of St. Gregory Nyssen, in allusion to the cemetery—*Φύσεως ἡμῶν μυστήρια*. They regarded it as one of the great schools to explain the mysteries of our nature, and the secrets of human weakness; from which, as St. Chrysostom says, every one must return with a philosophic mind.

But let us enter, and judge from our own observation respecting the character of all within.

In regard to the material arrangement, we find that the wards of the sick were contrived with the utmost attention to the delicacy which the most susceptible mind could desire. In each was an image of the saint, under whose invocation it was immediately placed, before which a lamp was constantly burning. Thus in the Hôtel Dieu, at Paris, we read of the halls of Our Lady, of St. Nicholas, of St. Paul, of St. Louis, of St. Augustin, of St. Raphael, of St. John, of St. Michael, of St. Charles, of St. Antony, of St. Roch; and one may remark the tender and profound thought of those who destined those of Our Lady and of St. Raphael, for the purpose of receiving persons who were to suffer surgical operations† In the two great hospitals at Munich, which excited the admiration of Howard, the Italian custom is observed of inscribing a passage from the

* D'Alibert, *Physiologie des Passions*, tom. i.

† Tenon, *Mém. sur les Hôpitaux de Paris*.

Bible at the foot of each bed.* In most hospitals of Italy Howard remarks that the wards of the sick are as lofty as churches. There was the utmost care exercised to prevent noise and disturbance. In front of the hospital of Santa Maria della Consolazione at Rome, there were always two chains drawn across the street every night, according to the command of Pope Alexander VII., as an inscription states—*Ne prætereunte strepitu quies amica silentii omnino ab ægrotantibus exularet.*

To hospitals were also generally attached spacious gardens, for the recreation of those that were recovering, and beautiful cloisters, in which they could take exercise, when the weather would not permit them to go abroad. Paradin says, that in the hospital of Lyons there is a vast hall with a huge chimney, in which the poor warm themselves, the men on one side, and the women on the other.

We have already been told of the splendour of the chapel which was annexed to these houses of mercy.

Among the officers and servants of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, we find enumerated the spiritual superior, who is the dean of the cathedral, chaplains of the choir, confessors, priests for the dying, master of the choristers, sacristan, organist, children of the choir, servant for the bell, and porter of the church.† The church was under the invocation of St. Christopher, and the form of dress, as well as the religious practices, used in the abbey of St. Victor, were established here. Ancient documents attest that in the hospital of St. Elizabeth at Treves, there were celebrated annually eleven hundred and forty-one masses or anniversaries.‡ The wards of the sick were generally so contrived, that the patients from their beds, without seeing each other, could all see the altar in the great church; so that during their sickness they enjoyed the inestimable consolation of being able to assist daily at the celebration of the divine mysteries.

It was a custom in the middle ages, observed by many great princes of the state and of the church, through humility and affection for the poor, to choose the chapel or cemetery of hospitals for their place of sepulture. This was the case at Lyons, where Cardinal Alphonso Du Plessis de Richelieu, archbishop of that see,

desired that his body should be borne without pomp to the hospital of the poor, and there buried in a plain tomb, on which were to be inscribed these lines, which he wrote on his death-bed with his own hand—*“Pauper natus sum, paupertatem vovi, pauper morior, inter pauperes sepeliri volo.”** In like manner, John Gaschier, Seigneur of Fontgieve, who had held a high office in the judicial court of Clermont, and his wife, Anne de Fredefont, of pious memory, were buried in the hospital in that city, which had been their own dwelling-house till the year 1682, when they gave it up to the brethren of charity, to be converted into a hospital for the sick poor, whom they constituted heirs of all their property at his death.† So, also, the great heroic minister and pacificator, Lopez de Barrientos, bishop of Cuença, confessor of King John II., and grand chancellor of Castille, having founded a hospital for the sick poor in the city of Cuença, and another in his native town of Medina del Campo, in the kingdom of Leon, after a laborious life of eighty-seven years, desired to be buried in the chapel of the latter hospital among the poor, of whom he had always been the father and protector, and whom he constituted his heirs. In the archives of this hospital there was an ancient manuscript recording that such was his desire.‡

It is in the hospice of St. Lazarus at Venice, which receives the mendicants, that you find the tomb of the illustrious senator and warrior, Lorenzo Dolphino, and also that of Aloisius Mocenicus, admiral of the Venetian fleet, whose body was borne thither, as the epitaph attests, amidst the tears and lamentations of the citizens.§

The same acts were repeated in the new world by the holy missionaries of Spain. Jerome de Loaysa, who first ruled the see of Lima, having founded in that city the great hospital of St. Anne, to which he left a yearly revenue of sixteen thousand crowns, chose to be interred within it among the poor.|| In fact there were occasions when the prince and the noble might wish in vain to be buried like them; for, during a general interdict, the body of the beggar or of the stranger pilgrim might be committed to a holy grave in consecrated ground, while that of the

* Howard, State of Hospitals.

† Mem sur les Hôpitaux.

‡ Hist. Hospit. S. Elis. Trev. 8.

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 338. † Id. ii. 302.

‡ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. iii. 21.

§ Splend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Ital. v.

|| Tournon, tom. iv. liv. 29.

knight would have to remain in the mortuary hall of his own good castle, though it were to lie unburied till devoured by rats, like that of Raymund VI., Count of Toulouse.*

The administration of hospitals in ages of faith is a theme that would admit of many and most interesting illustrations. Paradin says, that every one on being first admitted into the hospital at Lyons, is confessed, and then mercifully absolved.† The statutes of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, drawn up in the thirteenth century, declare as follows:—"A patient on being received shall make his confession and communion; after which he is to be placed in a bed, and treated as the master of the house, and served every day before the brethren."‡ From this attention to religious duties, the moderns must not infer that any diminution of mercy took place when the persons admitted were found to be of false belief. Moors, or heretics, were received in common with the faithful; and the only difference observed was in exempting them from such parts of the interior discipline as necessarily implied faith in the observers. When Howard was examining the hospital at Bruges, the nuns indeed asked him if he were a Catholic, but on his replying that he loved good persons of all religions, they only replied, with a smile, "Well, we hope that you may die a Catholic."

In the Hôtel Dieu at Paris it was strictly obligatory on the governors to have in the house one priest who understood the German, and another the Irish language, and it was desired to supply similar advantages to strangers of other nations, on the ground that otherwise hospitality was but imperfectly exercised.§ The chaplains never gave pain to patients who were not of the household of faith;|| but their ingenuity and prudence were often evinced in a most remarkable manner in their endeavours, by sweetness and all ways of blessed charity, soothing the thorny pillow of unhappy crime, to convert obstinate sinners, or to win to the Church persons who had never heard her voice or seen her represented, except by enemies. I remember in one of the great hospitals of Paris having been shown an old priest, who spent his days in going about the wards, making little presents to the sick, in order

to win their attention; and I was assured that many who had entered the hospital with souls more distempered than bodies, in consequence of his gracious ministry were enabled to leave it Christians and new men. De la Motte, relating that the Hôtel Dieu is open to all persons, whatever may be their religion, observes, that it has had the consolation of never having witnessed the death of a Turk or heretic, who had not previously been moved by the force of example and charity, aided by the grace of heaven, to abjure his errors.* Asylums of this kind might almost have been termed houses of convertites, as well as of the sick; inasmuch, that Pope Innocent III., in his epistle to the rector and brethren of the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome, institutes a solemnity to be observed there on the Sunday, when the Church reads the Gospel relating the presence of Jesus at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and assigning a reason for the choice of the day, says that this house is constantly witness to the salutary marriage which is morally celebrated in the conversion of sinners between the spirit of man and the grace of his Creator.†

The persons who served the sick, as we have already observed, were not hirelings who studied only to maintain a just proportion between their wages and their merit, but religious persons who had chosen to devote their lives to their office for the love of Christ; and who seemed, as Dante says of saintly lights in paradise, happier made at each new ministering. Howard relates, that as soon as a patient is brought to one of the hospitals of Lille, a nun is deputed to receive him, who brings water, washes his feet, and kisses one of them, after which he is placed in a bed covered with the whitest linen. We can judge of the consolation provided for the sick by merely observing the number of these devout attendants. In the hospital of St. Méry, at Paris, there were eight sisters of charity to wait upon fourteen sick persons. In that of St. André-des-Arcs, where were only six beds, there were five sisters. In the hospital of La Roquette, twenty-four nuns had the care of twenty sick. In the hospital of Saint-Mandé there were thirty-four nuns for the service of sixteen sick persons. In the hospital of incurables there were seventy-four persons to attend the patients, four ecclesiastics, four

* Hurter, *Gesch. Inn.* III. i. 352.

† *Hist. de Lyons*, liv. iii. 18.

‡ De la Motte, 49.

§ Tenon, *Mém. sur les Hôpit.* De la Motte.

|| De la Motte, 94.

* *Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu*, 127.

† *Innoc. III. Epist.* liv. x. 179.

officers, forty-three sisters of charity, and twenty-two domestics, which was allowing one attendant to five patients. In the Hôtel Dieu, which might receive more than three thousand four hundred sick, the number of religious ladies did not exceed one hundred and fifty, besides seventy novices : there were in its service twenty-four priests. In the Hôtel Dieu at Lyons there were one hundred and twenty sisters, and sixty domestics, brothers of the cross. In the hospital of charity at Paris, which was the chief house of the hospitalers in France, the proportion of persons assisting to the sick was one to two. There were fifty professed brethren and novices, but these brethren were charged with the affairs of numerous other hospitals of their order in the provinces. We may remark also, that when the number of sisters was more than sufficient, they held a school for children, to which they devoted their vacant hours. The great physicians who have treated upon the discipline of hospitals are unanimous in their expressions of admiration at the conduct of these devoted servants of the sick poor ; and Howard, though a Protestant, bore the same testimony to them. Describing the great hospital of Warsaw, he says, " that the nuns are attentive and charitable, and full of tender care for the sick, as they are everywhere. The superior is affectionate in discharging her duties ; and the looks of the inmates announce the love and respect which they entertain for her. At Ghent," he says, " that the attentive humanity of the nuns to the sick, the aged, and the mad patients, moves and edifies every beholder."

After visiting the hospital of St. John at Bruges, and witnessing the nuns who there devote their lives to console the sick poor, an ingenious traveller of the present day concludes her description with these words : " I could almost say that my idea of heaven was a place filled with sisters of charity." In allusion to the same hospital, Howard had remarked in general, that " it is to the nuns we are indebted for the vigilant care with which the sick are treated in all hospitals in Catholic countries." But to what do we owe the nuns ? to the Church, which alone had the secret of creating them ; to the Church, in which this great miracle was wrought of producing a constant succession of persons, who devoted their lives to serve and help others, from motives wholly disinterested ; to the Church, which moreover, with great practical wis-

dom, superintended all administration of mercy, and provided against abuse. Indeed with such care did the ecclesiastical authority provide for the proper discharge of these offices of mercy, that we find, in the thirteenth century, the celebrated Dominican, Vincent de Beauvais, commissioned by the Cardinal Eude de Chateauroux, apostolic legate in France, to superintend the reform of the brethren and sisters of the hospital of Beauvais,* and Robert Kilwarbi, Archbishop of Canterbury, among the very first acts of his government at the commencement of the reign of king Edward I. visiting the hospitals, and taking measures to have them better administered, and to correct abuses which had arisen during the vacancy of the see.† Even the domestics employed in works requiring mere strength of frame, were, in some respects, invested with a religious character. In the hospital of Lyons they wore a cross upon their habit, and none were admitted to the class of brethren until they had given sure proofs of virtue and attachment to the poor. Tenour remarks, what an emulation this cross excited among them, and what important advantages from it resulted to the institution.‡

In all these hospitals the religious superior was bound to teach the young servants their Catechism during Lent and Advent, and to deliver instructions on other days. All responsible officers were, however, discharged by the professed brethren and sisters, to whom were confided the gate, the kitchen, and the hall for medicines. In the hospital of St. John of God at Naples, Howard remarked over the table to receive provisions this inscription, " I was hungry and ye gave me to eat." In the great hospital of Sancta Maria-Nova at Florence, Howard remarked, that the repast is always blest by a Capuchin friar before it is served by the nuns, twenty of whom reside in the house, which is opposite to their convent. In the very kitchen you found the order of a monastery, and the silence which was only interrupted by the rosary or the salutation of blessed Mary, while in whatever direction you turned your eyes you beheld images of saints, or some emblems of heaven's mercy. In many places monks undertook the service of the sick in hospitals. Nothing, in fact, is more ancient in the monastic order

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.

† Id. tom. i. liv. 4.

‡ Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

than a zeal to assist them. "Rising each morning repair to the sick that are with you," says the great St. Antony, in his Rule; and again, "Visit the sick, and fill their vessels with water."* We have already seen that the hospital of the monastery was often designed to receive all sick persons.

St. Nicholas's hospital, which was in a place under the castle of Pontefract in Yorkshire, was governed by the monks of Pontefract. In founding the Hôtel Dieu at Rheims, the halls of which hospital are regarded as the most ancient of the existing buildings in that city, Hincmar, in order to provide for the spiritual as well as temporal wants of the poor, placed in it four canons to serve them, who continued always to be monks.†

In the great hospital at Caen, in which was a fine church founded by a prior, and certain number of brethren, the sick were served by monks, who wore the habit of canons regular of St. Augustin.‡ Howard says that the convent or hospital of San Francisco at Madrid justifies the observation that one can make in all Catholic countries, that the hospitals which are in convents are the cleanest, and most distinguished for order and calm. When the Capuchin friars were first received in Rome, they established a certain number of their brethren in the hospital of St. James, that they might tend the sick in that house, who were always such as suffered under incurable maladies. There men might witness a zeal comparable to that of the blessed Macharius, who, in the ninetieth year of his age did not hesitate to make a most painful journey to Alexandria three times, in order to procure fresh bread for a sick monk, whom he was tending with a father's love. With such devotion did these holy men minister night and day in this work of charity, that the institution which had been in a state of decay before their arrival, became very shortly one of the best conducted and efficient hospitals in the whole city. The cheerfulness and alacrity with which these venerable men discharged the most disagreeable offices, made such an impression upon all beholders, that many persons of a superior condition, on falling sick, chose to be removed into that sacred house in order that they too might experience

the love of these brethren. The charities of the people being now directed to it, the revenues in a short time were tripled, so that the hospital which before could scarcely maintain a very small number of patients, was able shortly to admit a multitude from all quarters.*

Francis Titelman, who passed from the fathers of the observance to the Capuchins in 1535, though one of the most learned men in Europe, insomuch that Erasmus, whose writings he attacked publicly, used to say that he was afraid of no one but him, devoted himself with such assiduity to serve the sick in that hospital, that, if possible, he made himself the least of all the brethren. Whatever office was most repugnant to sense, obtained his preference. Nothing was too laborious or too ignoble for him. It was an admirable spectacle to behold this man, renowned throughout the whole Christian world for his erudition, making the beds of the sick and administering their medicines. Some secular persons, who had been his disciples at Louvain, asked him why he did not give lectures at Rome, or at least engage in some literary work,—to whom he replied, pointing at the sick men with his finger, "Lo, you see my books before you; these are my editions of Ambrose, Augustin, and Chrysostom, which I must study day and night."† This devotion of the Capuchins was not confined to Rome. On the first arrival of these friars at Genoa, they were placed in a certain building adjoining the church of St. Columban, in the neighbourhood of the hospital of incurables, where they served the sick during many years. The protectors of that hospital were so grateful, that they purchased ground, and built the convent of St. Barnabas, into which they were removed, but without causing any interruption to their former exercise of mercy.‡

The order of Hospitaliers originated in the charity of the devoted knights, who sought to protect the Christians in the Holy Land. About the time when Jerusalem was first recovered from the Sarassins, Gerhard of Provence arrived in the holy city, and determined to devote himself to the service of his fellow Christians, in the hospital of St. John. So perfect was his charity, that he extended it also to unbelievers, and every tongue spoke the praises of his incomparable benevolence.

* Anton. ab Reg.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. i. 116.

‡ De Bourgueville, les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, ii. 33.

* Annales Capucinarum, an. 1530.

+ Id. an. 1537.

† Id. an. 1538.

In fact, the formula of the Bethlehemite brethren was this, "I, brother, make a vow of poverty, charity, and hospitality; and I bind myself to serve the poor on their recovery, though they should be infidels, and suffering from contagious maladies.* These Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or Hospitallers, like all the other military orders, had their origin from the black monks of St. Benedict. They were at first but lay brethren, under the abbot of St. Mary of the Latins in Jerusalem, and from their example the other orders arose. Elsewhere we had occasion to notice the wonderful phenomenon presented in the charity and self-devotion of these brave heroic men, who distinguished themselves as much in the wards of the hospitals as on the field of battle. In the twelfth century that brave and pious knight Henry Walpot Von Basenheim, from the banks of the Rhine, was elected grand master of the Teutonic order, because his boldness and valour were equalled by his love and tenderness for the unhappy pilgrims. The Christians of the west mourned for the sufferings of the devout pilgrims to the holy sepulchre, and presently the order of the Hospitallers of St. John, and that of St. Mary's Hospital, were instituted to protect and console them: wonderful spectacle did the world then behold in the multitudes of German nobles, who felt themselves called to renounce the ordinary pleasures and honours of life, in order to employ themselves in serving the poor pilgrims in hospitals for the love of God.†

The hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome was the head house of an order of monks called from it, brethren of the hospital of the Holy Ghost, who had hospitals in various countries, in which they served the sick poor. Guido founded a house of this description at Montpellier, and there is a letter of Pope Innocent III. to the brethren who serve it, reminding them that the rector of the order must always be in Rome, to whom the brethren in all countries owe obedience and reverence, and according to whose advice the rectors of all other hospitals of the order must be chosen.‡ There is mention also of a hospital of this order in the diocese of Halberstad in Germany.§ Spain, two centuries later, beheld the rise of a similar association, that was destined, however, to accomplish greater things.

* Hæliot, tom. iii. 366.

† Voight, Geschichte Preussens, ii. 12.

‡ Inn. Epist. Lib. xi. 104.

§ Id. Lib. xi. 69.

Now comes before us, in most bright effulgence, another of these men of violence who, by works of mercy, sought heaven. His history we must briefly note, as he passeth on. St. John of God, born of poor and humble parents, in the city of Grenada, in the year 1495, became the founder of the brethren of charity, who were soon spread all over Europe. This holy man was at first a soldier and a traveller, though when but a youth he gave himself up as a servant to the hospital at Medino Campi, in order that he might exercise his charity in serving the sick poor. Subsequently he appeared to have lost the grace of piety, and commenced a reckless course of adventures and wanderings; but being reconverted to a religious life by the sermons of St. Avila, he finally devoted himself to the assistance and comfort of the poor in hospitals. He entered Grenada as a poor man, only earning enough each day for his subsistence by selling wood, which he used to pick up in the forests; he was without credit, and yet he formed the resolution of founding a hospital. Walking through the city, he saw written upon a wall "House to let, to lodge the poor." Immediately he applied to the proprietor, who, without examining whether he had sufficient means, agreed to let him have it for a certain sum. Thus a poor man without a shilling, hired a house to receive the poor, and that was the origin of the great hospital at Grenada. The first thing he did was to call in the poor and the infirm; then he went out to beg alms for them, and from the first day he received enough to supply the most urgent wants of the institution. A chaplain of the king sent him three hundred and twelve reals, which were employed in purchasing beds. Many devout persons, nobles and others, gave him furniture and money. In this infant hospital, the sick poor were attended with the utmost care and tenderness.

The founder made it an essential part of his plan, to instruct and convert the souls of the poor whom he received, and he rejected no person however vile. Many priests, of their own accord, came to assist him, so that there was no want of attendance. Every night he used to go out to beg through the city, heedless of wind or rain, and cry out, "Do good to yourselves, my brethren." This mysterious sentence was drawn from that divine text which saith, "Benefacit animæ suæ vir misericors." In receiving every one without any scrutiny, he only imitated St. John the Almoner, whose charity was conformable to the maxims of

all the holy fathers. "Deus non cui detur, sed quo animo detur attendit." The Archbishop of Grenada, however, remonstrated with him on the danger, and spoke of what he heard respecting his receiving dissolute persons; but, he replied, "if my illustrious prelate and superior will condescend to visit the hospital, he will find no abuse, and he will be convinced that there is no one in it who deserves to be driven out but myself. Were I to receive only the just, our infirmary would be soon empty, and how should I be able to convert sinners? I confess that I do not acquit myself as I ought of such a ministry, and that I do not correspond to the grace of my vocation, and therefore I say to your grandeur, that I deserve to be driven out from this holy house." The supplies continued to be furnished with liberality. Dom Pedro Enriquez de Ribera, Marquis of Tarifa besides giving one hundred and fifty gold crowns, ordered, that every day while he was in Grenada, there should be sent to the poor of that hospital, one hundred and fifty loaves, four sheep, and eight hens. When the holy founder was seized with his last illness, he could only be persuaded to accept a more commodious lodging, by an order from the archbishop, who required him, on his obedience to remove to the house of a noble lady, who wished to nurse him. Many of the brethren who succeeded him in the hospital which he established, were of illustrious origin, and had served in the wars. Such were Pedro Velasco, Antony Martin, and Rodriguo de Siguença: the latter was a noble knight of the kingdom of Arragon, who after serving twenty years in the army of the king of Spain, coming to his country, where he found his parents dead, and his fortune ruined, turned his heart to God, came to Grenada, frequented the hospital of John of God, and became so enamoured of the poor, that he finally embraced the order. Such was also Sebastien Arias, who became superior of that holy family. The propagation of this holy brotherhood was rapid: in the reign of Phillip II. when it took rise, many hospitals were established in different cities of Spain. Philip III. gave public testimony of his affection for it, by going frequently with queen Marguerite, his wife, to visit the hospital of Madrid. All the grandees of the kingdom used to do so likewise, and leave great alms to the hospitals, which were soon, to the number of fifty, divided into the two provinces, called of Andalusia and of Castile. The order also made great progress in the West Indies;

so that it was divided into the four provinces of Peru, New Spain, Terra Firma, and the Philippines. Portugal also received the benefit of its establishment as did Rome, under Gregory XIII. who sent brethren to found similar hospitals in Flanders, Sicily, and Savoy. At Naples, Milan, and Florence they established magnificent hospitals. Shortly after they were called into Germany and Poland, and lastly France received them: they were invited to Paris, by Mary de Medicis, the wife of Henry IV. who founded for their use, in 1602, the hospital of charity in the Fauxbourg St. Germain; and some years after they possessed twenty-four houses in the different provinces of that kingdom. According to their rules, no exceptions were to be made, but all persons were to be received, whether Moors or other infidels. The health of the soul was to be attended to with the utmost care, while that of the body was consulted: the patients were to be instructed and won from the false maxims of the world to those of Jesus Christ. The brethren of the hospital were to read to them, and to assist them to pray, and perform other spiritual exercises; so that these houses were true hospitals for souls as well as for bodies. Howard, speaking of the charitable houses at Florence, and observing that the hospital which one visits with most pleasure is that of S. Giovandi-Dio, repeats a remark which he had made in other places, "that these monks discharge their duty in a manner that does them great honour." Bernier, the physician, in his History of Blois, speaking of the hospital, and of the religious men of this order of St. John of God, who serve it, concludes with these words: "If the physician Herophilus had reason to say that remedies are the hands of God, there are particular reasons for believing it of those who dispense them in this place." The noble poets of Spain, Lopez de Vega and others, celebrated in verse the renown of St. John of God, and the hospitals which he founded: and it is said, that the bare recital of one of these poems in the city of Segovia led to the conversion of sinners. In fact, the hospital of Grenada, shortly after its establishment, was the scene and instrument of a miraculous grace. Antony Martin had imprisoned Don Pedro Velasco on the charge of having killed his brother, and had come to Madrid to hasten on the prosecution. Antony, though a proud knight, abandoned to a life of worldly pleasure, had nevertheless become known to St. John of God, by means of a practice, which was familiar to him, of visit-

ing his hospital, and the holy man had recourse to prayer, in hopes of reconciling these two enemies. Meeting Antony in a street, he presented him with a crucifix, which he always held in his sleeve, and urged him to pardon his enemy, if he wished to be himself pardoned by Jesus Christ. "If your enemy," said he, "killed your brother, our Lord died for you and for me; and if the blood of your brother cries for vengeance, much more should the blood of your Saviour move you to forgiveness." These words, pronounced with a pathetic tone, pierced the heart of Antony Martin: falling on his knees before the servant of God, he promised with tears, that from that moment, from being the mortal enemy and the proud grandee, he would become the friend of Velasco, and the servant of the poor. "I will now lead you to the prison," said the convertite, "where I shall embrace Velasco in your presence, and then deliver him; and do you, in return, lead me to your hospital, where I may consecrate myself to God." After these words they walked together to the prison, where Velasco was each day expecting death. Great was his terror on seeing Antony Martin enter, but the servant of God gave him speedy encouragement. The two knights embraced and gave each other the kiss of peace; they mutually vowed an everlasting friendship; but thenceforth their hearts were wholly fixed on heaven. They both declared their resolution to serve the poor in the hospital with St. John of God during the remainder of their lives. It was an admirable spectacle shortly afterwards, as soon as Velasco could leave the prison, to behold the holy man walking through the streets of Grenada, having on each side these two friends, once such implacable foes, and now so closely knit together in bonds of grace: they were on their way from the prison to the hospital, which they never left afterwards. A long retreat and a course of instruction developed and completed the conversion of these two noblemen, who became eminent servants of Jesus Christ.

Such is a brief outline of the origin of this celebrated order of the fathers of mercy, and of the hospitals which they founded. The forty-two first years of the life of St. John of God were spent in travels and pilgrimages, and in great labours, and the thirteen last were consecrated to the service of the poor, in the house which he founded for their reception. It is said that he used to nourish himself chiefly upon onions. His staff became a relic which was celebrated

through all Spain. It was deposited in the hospital founded by the Lady Eleanore de Mandoca, who gave up for this purpose her own house and all her property to enrich the foundation. Devout persons caused this staff to be encased in silver, in order to testify their gratitude for the cure of their diseases. His death had been lamented not alone by the Christians, but also by the Moors in the city of Grenada, who expressed in their language the admiration which they felt for his virtue.

It was, however, in general, to nuns and devout women that the care of the sick devolved in the great institutions of the west, and to promote these sisterhoods we find the charity of individuals continually directed. St. Francis de Sales, remarking that the charity exercised towards the sick who are not in extreme danger, "is only a counsel," adds this observation, "It is meritorious to visit them; it is still more so to serve them: but to devote ourselves entirely to them, like the Hospitaliers, is the highest perfection of this counsel: and congregations of ladies are established for this end in several towns." In the church of Emery, in the diocese of Paris, was an inscription recording that Mary le Camus, wife of Michael Particelli, seigneur of Emery, had established not only the Confraternity of Charity, but also the Community of Sisters for the care of the Sick.*

In many places, as at Nièuport in Flanders, the hospital was served by sisters of the third order of St. Francis. Wherever these charitable and truly devoted sisterhoods had not been regularly established, their services were sure to be called for when the days of trial and danger arrived. How sublime is the following brief notice, which occurs in the work entitled *Gallia Christiana*:—"This year, 1629, as the plague raged with great violence in Bourges, Roland de Beaumont the Archbishop called in the hospital virgins for the care of the poor."† Occasionally, but only in an incidental manner, the heroism of their individual members is recorded; and from what escapes the local historians in reference to them, one may form some idea of its action. During the dreadful fire, which consumed a large part of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris in 1772, one of the nuns, named the mother of St. Louis, who was of a delicate constitution, snatched from the flames, and carried in her

* Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. xiv. 433.

† Tom. i. 171.

arms into the nave of the cathedral no less than fifteen patients, one after the other.*

Paradin says, that the poor in the Hôtel Dieu at Lyons are received and nourished by the devout sisters, one of whom, as superior, is called the mother. These women serve the poor day and night, administer their medicines, give them food, make their beds, wash their linen, and, when they have given them dinner, they go into their chapel, and render God thanks, and they have no other wages for all their service but the grace of God, which is preferable to all the riches of the world.†

The Sisters of Charity were instituted by St. Vincent de Paul and Mademoiselle Le Gras, in about the year 1635. These, with the sisters of Sain-Ville, made their vows annually, whereas the sisters of St. Thomas de Villeneuve, and the religious ladies of the Hôtel Dieu, took the four great vows. In all hospitals these nuns used to sleep in a common dormitory. The report on the general administration of the hospital of the city of Paris, published in 1823, contains these words:—"The models to imitate, which we find in the Hôtel Dieu, are not comprised in the material structure, but in the tender care of the nuns for the sick, in the assiduity of the chaplains, and in the skill of the professors."

When I resided in that capital, a young Irish student of medicine, being attacked with a mortal illness, chose to be transported to the hospital of our Lady of Pity, in order that he might have the assistance of the nuns of the order of St. Thomas de Villeneuve, whose attention and service to the sick he had been accustomed to witness in the course of his professional attendance there, and some time after he died in that hospital the death of the just.

Notwithstanding the number of these religious communities in the middle ages, it must be remembered that the persons who discharged servile offices towards the sick in hospitals, were not exclusively nuns and religious men for that purpose professed: for it was a common exercise of devotion amongst persons of every rank, living in the world to devote certain days, or certain portions of each day, to perform acts of this heroic charity. In fact it was regarded as a general duty, from which no Christian was exempt. "We should visit the sick," says a writer of the thirteenth century, "in order to comply with the bonds of nature,

to imitate our Lord, to receive mercy for ourselves, and to secure the completion of our reward."*—"If we should see a sick person," said St. Ambrose, "let us not desert him; if any one in danger, let us not leave him: let us desire that the words of Job may be applicable to ourselves, that the benediction of the dying may come upon us. *Benedictio morituri in me veniat.* How many have derived a benediction from this verse."†

St. Samson was a Roman gentleman, a physician by profession, who having been ordained priest at Constantinople, evinced his charity by consecrating himself to the service of the sick in a hospital which he began to construct, and which the Emperor Justinian afterwards completed with royal magnificence. St. Francis Xavier, and St. Ignatius of Loyola, at the commencement of the institution of their order, gave wonderful examples of ardent charity in the most celebrated hospitals of Europe. The learned fathers of the society, whom Scardeone the Paduan simply designates, soon after their institution, as *humiles homines et in pauperes omnium liberalissimi*,‡ when at Trent took up their lodging in the hospital, and they had orders not to appear in the council until they had served the poor and the sick for several hours. In the hospital at Sienna is shown the place, which is now a church, where the seraphic daughter of that city, St. Catherine, used to repose after rendering pious assistance to the sick.

Don Antonio, the eldest son of Don Felix de Guzman, and Donna Joanna de Aza, brother of St. Dominick, spent his whole life in the exercise of works of mercy in a hospital in which he was regarded as a saint.§ St. Anselm, when prior of Bec, was particularly distinguished by the charity with which he visited the infirmary; and St. Thomas, when Archbishop of Canterbury, used also to visit the public hospitals, and tend the sick. How many sovereign pontiffs have been accustomed, like Pius V. and Benedict XIII. to visit the hospitals of Rome; and not content with superintending the mode of administration, by examining the provisions and beds, have shown every mark of personal affection to the sick, tending them with their own hands, and consoling them with their sweet words. The duke of Orleans, son of Charles V., used to be constantly visiting the Hôtel Dieu for that

* Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 5.

† Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. 18.

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Moral. Lib. iii. p. x. 24.

† De Ben. Mort. c. viii.

‡ De Antiq. Patav. ii. 5.

§ Tournon, Vie de St. D. liv. i. 1.

purpose. Martha, daughter of the marquis d'Oraison, of one of the most illustrious houses of Provence, died in 1627 in the same hospital, where she devoted herself to minister to the sick; and the duchess of Nemours, mother of the queen of Portugal, fell a victim to her zeal in carrying broth to a patient there, attacked by the small-pox. The beautiful lady Lucina, of the house of Stropeni, on her conversion by the preaching of the blessed friar Mathieu Carrieri, having been enrolled in the third order of St. Dominique, used, with consent of her husband, to perform these works of mercy to the sick in the hospitals of Soncino.* Down to our times the Hôtel Dieu at Paris is accustomed to admit the visits of many ladies, noble as well as others, who are known under the name of Ladies of Charity. These pious persons come here to distribute alms amongst the convalescent, to console the sick by their religious exhortations, to instruct them by reading devout books at their bed's side. The author of a late historic treatise on that hospital says, "These ladies are often seen in the morning assisting the nuns in the most painful offices, and in the evening appearing as the ornament of a brilliant company.† That devotion to the sick in time of pestilence, which we witnessed in the last chapter, was an heroic charity to meet extraordinary circumstances; but the ordinary exercises of the merciful in attending hospitals where there was no general excitement, seems to constitute a fact at least equally remarkable; for if we reflect upon the quality of the persons who undertook these offices, many of whom were of royal or most noble rank, and upon the nature of the duties implied, which comprised whatever was most humiliating and obnoxious to nature, we shall be convinced that nothing short of the Catholic religion, in all its supernatural vitality, with all its doctrines of mortification, and love of poverty as the love of Christ in his members, could have been adequate to produce this zeal.

Thucydides, indeed, in his account of the plague at Athens, says that those persons who made a profession of the greatest virtue were then induced through shame to visit the sick when deserted by their relations, and not to spare themselves; and that in consequence they, more than all others, fell victims to the malady.‡ Such conduct, no doubt, was honourable; but yet, how im-

measurably did it fall short of the devoted ministry of the humble Christian, who offered himself, not through vain glory, but solely for the love of Jesus Christ, and through affection for his brethren! Moreover, it might be justly affirmed that many of the offices which this duty involved would have wholly changed their character, and been no longer associated with the idea of merit and grace if they had proceeded from any other principle, but that which is found in effective operation only within the Catholic Church. "If any man," says Plato, "were to dare to do what he performs for love through any other motive, he would reap the greatest reproach of philosophy: if, wishing to obtain riches, or kingly power, or any thing else, he were ready to submit to all the humiliations and hardships which are undergone for love, he would be prevented both by friends and enemies; whereas, performed through love, all these things possess a grace which makes them be considered lawful and fair."

An ingenious author, in an affecting passage of a celebrated book, has described the situation of a poor leper secluded in a solitary house at Aosta, who used to open the door of his garden from time to time to receive the flowers which were thrown to him by children. The good offices of the merciful to persons afflicted with this loathsome disease were not, however, confined to such shows of kindness; and the charity of devout persons to lepers is not more remarkable than the ingratitude with which it was often repaid. On most questions, unhappily, the human philosopher comes to very different conclusions from the saint, and the difference is never more striking than when the need of placing oneself in contact with the miserable has been the subject of inquiry. Above all things, says Michael Scot, beware at all times of a man unfortunate by the work of nature; that is, of a man who hath lost any member, such as the eye or the hand: and the reason is, because whoever is rendered unhappy, by the very fact of his being unhappy, is opposed to the happy, and there is much injury that results to many from an unknown source: for a man can more easily guard himself from his public and avowed enemy than from an unfortunate person. And be it known that there is no creature of such good complexion, that if it loses a member, will not change its state, and that for the worse generally, and very rarely for the better, if it live long. Therefore, is it said, "Cavete a signatis;" and elsewhere, "In homine signato in aliquo

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 22.

† Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 21.

‡ Lib. ii. 51.

membro non confidas.* Admitting the truth of the observation, men, during ages of faith, only discerned in it an additional motive for the exercise of mercy towards such unhappy persons, since it taught them that by one and the same act they could practise two of the most eminent virtues of the interior life.

The ancient historians of Florence relate that on one occasion a leper came to St. Antoninus, the archbishop, and complained of the conduct of a certain citizen towards him. The inquiry which the prelate instituted led to his discovery of a hidden treasure in the person of this citizen. He was a simple artisan, whose sanctity had been only known to God, and perhaps to his confessor. Devoted to prayer and to his work, he lived in a profound retreat, the labour of his hands supplying with necessaries himself and also many poor persons, to whom he distributed secretly every evening a part of what he had gained in the day. He passed the Sundays and festivals in the churches, or in serving the sick in the hospital of St. Paul; but in order to have an occasion always present of patience and charity, he had invited a poor abandoned leper to live with him; he nourished him, he served him as if he waited on Jesus Christ, washed his sores, and bore with his bad temper and the reproaches which he heaped daily upon him. This was the wretched creature who now came before the archbishop to lodge a complaint against his benefactor, as if all he had done had been not through charity, but under a strict obligation. The saint soon detected the truth of the case, and went to visit the poor artisan, whom he exhorted to persevere, and reminded of the reward which awaited him in heaven.† The mercy evinced towards lepers in the middle ages is certainly one of the miracles of history. The moderns may well lift their hands in astonishment at mention of it, for in their society no one would ever imagine that such things could be. The amiable author who composed the *Natural History of Selborne*, seems conscious of nothing defective in his account of the wretched "pauper" afflicted with leprosy in that village, though he concludes it by saying, "In this sad plight he dragged on a miserable existence, a burden to himself and his parish, which was obliged to support him, till he was relieved by death at more than thirty years of age." He does not

seem aware that there ever had been ages when such an object would have been esteemed a treasure, not a burden; yet he need only have looked back for proof of their having been such, to the short distance which separated him from Catholic times, when, as he remarked, "charitable persons bequeathed large legacies to such poor sufferers;" and when, though there might have been wanting an observer on the spot, to describe the physical peculiarities of the disease in a work of natural history, there would assuredly have been in the village of Selborne, as well as in the city of Florence, some pious person to harbour and cherish him, though he were to live far beyond the age of thirty years, for the love of Christ. We have already seen the merciful and affectionate act of the Count of Anjou, and such deeds were continually coming to notice; for, not to speak of seraphic men, like St. Francis, who used to tend the lepers with his own hands, we find them performed by persons of all classes in common walks of life. John de Monte Mirabile, a high and puissant nobleman, carried a poor leper in his arms to the church. St. Julian placed a leper in his own bed. One of the Counts of Champagne used frequently to visit a poor leper, commending himself to his prayers. Examples of this kind might be multiplied without end from our ancient histories; and to appreciate the force of them we should consider what kind of service this really was. "The leprosy," says Baron d'Alibert,* whose life has been devoted to the study of similar maladies, "is the most horrible of all the physical infirmities to which man is subject. It is impossible to behold the sufferer without horror; he is an object hideous and revolting. The disease brings with it also a train of insurmountable evils; it takes from humanity all its force; every thing becomes unnatural, even to the voice, which resembles that of a lion; there is something sinister in the very smile, which, so far from sympathising with our nature, fills the soul with terror." Now, to recur to the remark of Plato, and its application, what should we think of one who, for the sole desire of gaining money, should undertake day and night to attend such an object as this? But how sublime the love of those great princes, of those tender and beautiful women who, for the love of their Saviour, devoted themselves to this task with all the affection of their souls, watching over these wretched

* *Liber Physionomiae quæ compilavit magister Michael Scotus*, pars ii. cap. 24.

† Tournon, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* iii.

* *Physiologie des Passions*, tom. ii.

beings like tutelary angels, studying all their wishes, all their caprices,—identifying themselves, as it were, with this disfigured body, dressing its hideous wounds, and cherishing in their bosom objects which make every other beholder shudder and turn pale! St. Elizabeth of Hungary used to sit down familiarly by the side of the poor lepers, and exhort them to patience and confidence in God. On one occasion her young ladies of honour detected her in the act of cutting off the head of hair which cruelly tormented one of these sufferers. She only smiled, and said nothing.*

The mysterious principle of an interior life communicated in the mysteries of the Catholic religion, produced that love of Jesus Christ and that desire of serving Him in the persons of the afflicted poor, which banished from the heart of men, however exalted in earthly dignity, all haughtiness and disdain, all fear of incurring ridicule, all selfishness, and personal vanity, and imparted to their manners the engaging, affectionate simplicity of youth; so that they would perform the lowest servile office for that purpose, without the least sense of being humbled, and without affectation or any thought of making a parade of virtue. "The worst of men," says St. Bonaventura, "if he saw Christ lying on a bed, would fervently and diligently minister to him, but the perfect man beholds Christ in every sick neighbour, and refuses no labour or disquiet to console him, knowing that this is more acceptable to God than if he had even ministered to Christ himself. I will discover to you whom my soul loveth. He lies in the infirmary; there he suffers pain and distress. Run and minister to him; and if we cannot all serve him, for many are themselves poor, at least we can all give compassion, and consider Christ. I firmly believe that if we neglect Christ on earth, we shall not have him in heaven. Hear what he saith, 'I was sick, and you did not visit me;' and let us fear this sentence, my dear brethren. Let us not ask of him, as concerning another, Where dost thou lie? since we already know the place; for we know that he lies in the infirmary. Nothing remains but to discharge our duty."† Oh, tarry not! the hearers would exclaim, when the saintly teacher ceased, "let not time be lost through slackness of affection. Hearty zeal to serve reanimates celestial grace."

* Ct. De Montalembert, Hist. de St. Elis. c. 8.

† St. Bonaventura, Stimul. Divin. Amoris, pars ii. cap. 7.

This would be their cry; for men who touched the Catholic chord knew the short way to dissolve their hearts, and a few such broken simple words of a Bonaventura would move compassion more than all the verses of Simonides. But would you, as it were, behold with what ardent desire they sought to discharge that duty? Then look around you, and observe the monuments of those times which have escaped destruction; for, as Dante saith, the mind of him who hears is often loth to acquiesce and fix its faith, unless the instance brought be palpable, and proof apparent urge. Such proof is seen in the very structure of the ancient hospitals, for many of them, as undoubted records still attest, were erected from no other motive immediately actuating the founder than the longing of his soul to minister with his own hands to the sick, and to hear the words of Christ that would acknowledge that act addressed to himself at the day of judgment.

What house of mercy have we here? Behold its solid masonry, its goodly temple; a crowd of many poor men enter it, and at the portal stands a dame whose sweet demeanour doth express a mother's love. This is St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who hath given the greater part of her dower to build this hospital, expressly in order that she may serve the poor within it, as if she had been the humblest domestic. Such is the desire of these pious architects, who loved their work so inwardly that their eye did ever watch it.

If we look to Naples we shall find a similar example. Maria Longa, a Spanish lady, wife of John, the first chancellor in the kingdom of Naples, had contracted a nervous complaint in consequence of having drunk poison given to her by a servant, which deprived her wholly of the use of her limbs, and having been instantaneously restored to health in the church of Loretto, while mass for the sick was said, returned to her home deeply impressed with a sense of the divine favour which she had received. Her husband dying shortly afterwards, she gave up all her vast possessions to the poor, and founded the hospital of incurables in Naples, besides a convent of poor Clares, in which she subsequently took the veil. In this hospital the illustrious woman devoted herself night and day to discharge every painful office, as if, instead of being the foundress, she had been the lowest handmaid of the house. The Neapolitan nobility, accustomed to the manners of the blessed merciful, nevertheless flocked

to behold this spectacle! After some time had elapsed, she resigned the administration of the hospital to Mary Aerba, duchess of Termula, who, through her example and exhortations, had renounced all the vanities of the world, and devoted herself wholly to charitable works. Her last years were spent in her convent of poor Clares, and her last words to the afflicted sisters who stood round her bed were these:—Speak not of my good works, beloved children; what you ascribe to me were the gifts of God. If you take from me what belonged to God, there will be nothing left: lo, these wounds of Christ. O daughters, these are the merits which can alone gain me a place in heaven. Farewell! Behold! the spouse cometh!*

In the reign of Philip-le-Bel, Marguerite, second wife of Charles, king of Sicily, being a widow, built herself a small house outside of the town of Tournus, which is between Châlons and Mascon, and adjoining the house a magnificent hospital, where as Nicole Gille relates, she used to serve the poor travellers with her own hands, and wash their feet, dress their wounds, and clothe them with fresh habits. Thus, when St. Jerome received in his hospital at Bethlehem the European pilgrims who fled from the persecutions of the Goths, we read that he not only washed their feet, but rubbed their camels, according to the example of Rebecca, who drew water for the camels of Eleazer, after having supplied Eleazer himself.

When Theoderic, Count of Flanders, returned home from Palestine, his wife, Sibilla, remained there, to serve God for the rest of her days. She was daughter of Fulco, king of Jerusalem, lately deceased, and sister of Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, then reigning. After she had come to the Holy City with her husband, she began to serve the poor and sick in the church of the hospital of St. Lazarus, and she used to minister with wonderful humility to them in their loathsome distempers. After ten years thus spent in the hospital, she slept in the Lord.†

Marie-Thérèse, queen of Louis XIV., and daughter of Philip IV. of Spain, used to visit the poor and tend the sick in the public hospitals, putting on a coarse dress, and serving them with food. When a certain lady of the court expressed surprise

at some act of extreme personal mortification, and said that it might injure her health, that holy queen replied, "I cannot better employ my health than in serving Jesus Christ, suffering in his members." How many princesses of Brabant are recorded to have acted in the same manner! The counts of Troyes, of Blois, and of Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy and Normandy, used similarly to minister to the sick poor in the hospitals. Stephen, the holy king of Hungary, used to go alone by night to visit the hospitals, and unknown to serve the sick, and watch by their beds. To the present day the nobles of Italy and Portugal are in habits of discharging the same offices. Wherever, in short, the Catholic faith reigned, there was one rule and tradition of compassionate manners, to which no one ever thought of preferring the tastes or habits of a national character. The works of mercy were as well known as any of the professional duties of life. All knew where Christ was laid: as the holy friar said, they knew that he was in the hospital, and that nothing remained but to visit him. The duty was shown to them in all possible simplicity of language, and wherever there was faith, it was affectionately and effectually fulfilled.

Such, then, were these great institutions, founded by the merciful, and multiplied over the whole world during ages of faith. Such was the object of their authors, and such the spirit which presided in their administration. It only remains to observe the means which were generally adopted in the middle ages for their creation and support. In most instances their founders had endowed them with landed estates, from the revenues of which they were permanently maintained.

The Hôtel Dieu at Paris had estates in Flanders, Normandy, and other distant provinces. It had great sheep-walks and pens at Aubervilliers for its flocks, from which every week the required number of sheep were removed to its particular shed, for the daily consumption of the house. It had a country villa for the lady nuns. In the year 829 Inchade, bishop of Paris, assigned to this hospital the tenth of the property which he gave to his chapter. At Lyons, brethren of the house remained always in the country, in order to purchase cattle and corn, and the administration was exclusively placed in the hands of persons who devoted their time and labour to that work gratuitously. We have seen that at the hospital of Lisbon the

* Annales Capucinum, an. 1542.

† Chronic. S. Bertini. cap. xlv. pars ii. apud Martène Thesaurus Anecd. tom. iii.

annual receipts were always expended within the year, and at the Hôtel Dieu of Paris the funds of the institution used to be sold, and even its reliquaries and sacred vessels pledged, if at any time the revenue was found insufficient, as was done in 1709.

Pope Innocent III., after building at his own expense the vast hospital of the Holy Ghost in Rome, enriched it not only with his own patrimony, but also with many privileges. Notwithstanding its vast possessions, he desired that it should be assisted with the alms of the faithful, and with this view he instituted in the hospital a solemn station, to be observed for ever on the Sunday after the octave of the Epiphany, on which day the holy effigy of Christ is exposed in St. Peter's Church to the veneration of the people; and he ordained that this should be borne processionally, with psalmody and lighted torches, from the basilica to the hospital, where the Roman pontiff should preach on works of mercy, and their efficacy in obtaining forgiveness of sins; and, in order that by example as well as words he should provoke the people to charity, there was to be a distribution of bread, meat, and money to all the poor who came there on that day.* The bishop of Chartres gave the revenues of a prebendal stall in his cathedral in alms to the sick poor of this hospital, which grant was confirmed by apostolical authority,† though Innocent ordained that a third of the sum should be paid to whoever served the office, lest the church of Chartres should be defrauded of its accustomed service.

The hospital of the Holy Ghost at Montpellier was confirmed by Pope Innocent III. in the possession of no less than eleven houses, with all pertaining to them, in different regions, of which two were in Rome.‡

Many hospitals in Spain at one time derived a certain revenue from the money which was collected at theatres and other public spectacles, so that when Peter de Tapia, bishop of Segovia, prevailed on Philip IV. to prohibit such as were losing their ancient religious character and becoming profane, and calculated to corrupt the manners of youth, he gave up one thousand crowns every year to indemnify them.§

* Gesta Innocent. ii. III. 144.

† In. III. Epist. iib. x. 223.

‡ Inn. Epist. Lib. i. 97.

§ Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. v. liv. 36.

The Hôtel Dieu at Paris did not receive any revenue from the receipts at the theatres before the reign of Louis XIV., who gave to it a ninth of the money so collected.* The orphan hospital at Pampluna derived part of its revenue from a kind of tax on all who played at tennis, which was a favourite game in Navarre.

Many hospitals owed their rise and support, like that of Grenada, to the casual bounty of charitable persons, and in the donations of alms to hospitals in ancient times there are many singular dispositions made. In the year 1168, Maurice, bishop of Paris, with the consent of his chapter, decreed that in future the bishop's bed, with all belonging to it, should be given, after his death, to the poor of the Hôtel Dieu. The act provides, that if the bed should not be worth twenty sous, the surplus must be given in money. The canons followed his example till 1413, when they agreed to leave an equivalent. Donations of the same kind were made also by the laity. Philip Augustus, in 1280, gave to the Hôtel Dieu the straw and bed stuffing of his house in Paris every time he left it to sleep elsewhere; and John II. confirmed this grant in 1358.†

The departure of knights to the crusade was an occasion of wealth to hospitals, for no Baron or Paladin would have deemed his preparation complete, if, before leaving his ancestral towers, he had not given alms to the nearest house of mercy for the sick poor. Thus in 1202, Count Baldwin of Flanders, not content with enriching churches and monasteries, with an especial view to the object of his expedition to the Holy Land, took care to provide also for the hospitals, as for that of Aldenarda, and for the close of lepers at Ghent.‡

The kings of France used to distribute at the beginning of Lent, among the hospitals and poor religious houses, a sum of two thousand two hundred livres, besides a quantity of corn and fish; and St. Louis changed into a law their alms, which in addition used to be given every day during that season, placing them in future at the disposal of the administrators of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris. Charles-le-Bel rendered perpetual the gift made by his predecessors to that house, of two hundred cart loads of wood annually from their forests, adding another hundred, on condition that

* Notice, Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu.

† De la Motte, Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 27.

‡ Miræ. Dipl. Belg. Sup. 84. ap. Hurter.

the brethren and sisters should every year, at the four principal feasts, cause to be conducted with four horses and two of their servants, the relics of the holy chapel of Paris, to the place where the king should happen to be, provided the distance did not exceed thirty-four leagues. Philippe de Valois, in 1344, granted to them the right of free pasture for two hundred swine in his forest of Rez; and Charles V., in 1372, gave them the same privilege in the forest of Compiègne. The exemptions and privileges granted by the state, formed an important source towards the support of hospitals: Their goods and provisions were subject to no toll or tax whatever.*

The governors of hospitals and of houses for lepers in Paris used to station persons on one of the bridges every Monday to beg the alms of passengers for their support.†

The general collections for hospitals were made by means of trunks in all the churches, which used to be emptied on seven great days of indulgence every year. In 1663 the sum raised in Paris alone in this manner, amounted to twenty-one thousand livres. Agents were also sent for this purpose through different provinces, publishing the papal indulgences, and on Sundays and festivals there used to be a collection made in every church.‡

The widow's mite, the poor man's wages, and the scholar's allowance, were joined to the alms of an Alfred or a St. Louis. In 1362, the Confraternity of Drapers at Paris decreed that on the day of their assembly a portion of bread, meat, and wine, should be given to every poor person in the Hôtel Dieu. The supply of ecclesiastical habits every year at All Saints to all the priests and clerks charged with the divine office there, was provided by Oudard de Maucreux, a pious citizen, whose foundation for this purpose was commemorated in curious verses upon a brass plate in the chapel. "It is a remarkable fact," says the historian of Paris, "that in this capital a public establishment conceived with views of usefulness, and above all with the intention of affording instruction and edification, has never failed to obtain protectors and munificent benefactors from among the first class of its inhabitants."§

Nothing like ostentation belonged to the works of mercy in Catholic countries. In the report respecting the state of the Hôtel

Dieu at Paris, published in 1663, the names of deceased benefactors alone are given, for the reason thus expressed, that the living had desired their alms to be in secret.* Until the breaking out of the revolution, it must be admitted that the donations of the French nobility to the support of hospitals were truly munificent. Vast sums had been given by many illustrious victims a few years before, of which the list was published by De la Motte. Indeed, in this respect, there had never been ground for complaint. It was in the year 1617, while Paris was agitated by civil discords, at a time when the Louvre beheld the murder of a Marechal of France, that a solitary unknown priest, son of a poor peasant, having neither riches nor credit, laid the first stone of the vast institution of the Association of Charity, which subsequently rendered the name of Vincent de Paul renowned throughout the world. We have seen what was the origin of the great hospital of St. John of God at Grenada, and most houses of his order had no other foundation but the alms of the faithful. Peter, who styled himself the sinner, in the fifteenth century, of whom nothing was known but that he was from Andalusia, and who lived as a hermit for many years on a high mountain, in the territory of Malaga, thence descending into the cities of men preaching on the love of God with such zeal and unction, that innumerable souls were converted, after making a pilgrimage to Rome, appeared in the streets of Seville as another Jonas, and called on all men to do penance, and with such force did he preach, that he was able to found a hospital for the poor with the alms which persons gave him, without his ever asking for any.

Delille, in his poem on Pity, has sung the merciful and unhopèd-for asylum which was opened to the suffering exiles of France by the poor exiled priests of Somers'-town; and well may astonishment be awakened at the prodigious works of charity which are still being performed without any worldly aid by the worthy successors and fellow labourers of Carron, at Chelsea, Hampstead, and many other places. In these true prodigies of mercy, which strike the attention of the most incredulous observer, we have only before our eyes the same operation which was constantly visible during the middle ages; and one may conceive what must have

* De la Motte, *Essai Hist.*

† Lebeuf, *Hist. du Diocèse de Paris*, tom. i. 9.

‡ De la Motte, *Essai Hist.* 117.

§ S. Victor, *Tableau de Paris*, tom. xi. 179.

* De la Motte, 130.

been the resource in the liberality of great prelates, when so much can be effected by the alms of the poor missionary priests, depending on charity for his own subsistence. Vanderburch, Archbishop of Cambray, besides supporting other hospitals and schools, used to give fifteen thousand florins every year to the hospice for poor maidens in that city.* Pope Pius V. gave twenty thousand gold crowns to the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome. It should be remarked also, that the gratuitous service of religious persons gave power to the administrators to employ all the resources of the house upon the immediate objects. The nuns and brethren performed every thing; they were even the architects; as when the hospital of St. Denis was rebuilt in 1725, under the sole direction of sister Michelle Michelon, who was then superior of that house. They were the farmers and artisans, employed as at Lyons, where the brethren of the cross take care of the estates, perform the offices of carpenters and masons, attend the markets to purchase the provisions, conduct the carts and the baths, and make collections.

When the epoch of the change of religion arrived in England, the greatest part of the hospitals and hospices shared the fate of the monasteries and other institutions, which had originated in faith. We may read the history of those days in the conduct of the present Portuguese government, which seems to have rendered itself very familiar with the politico-theological measures that were adopted in the sixteenth century. At all times, proceedings of this kind are only a natural consequence of the opinions which supersede divine faith. The fact respecting England cannot be better stated than in the words of Weever:—"All monasteries," saith he, "being thus suppressed, it followed that, under a fair pretence of rooting out of superstition, all chantries, colleges, and hospitals were likewise, by act of parliament, left to the disposal and pleasure of the king. And all these monuments of our forefathers' piety and devotion, to the honour of God, the propagation of Christian faith, and good learning, and also for the relief and maintenance of the poor and impotent, (if without offence I may speak the truth), all these, I say, for the most part, were shortly after, to wit, within the remainder of his reign, and the

short time of his son's, king Edward VI., everywhere pulled down, their revenues sold and made away; and those goods and riches which the Christian piety of our English nation had consecrated to God, since they first professed Christianity, were in a moment, as it were, dispersed and (to the displeasure of no man be it spoken) profaned."* Since that time institutions of mercy have in many countries wholly lost the character which belonged to them universally in ages of faith. In those once happy regions which were devastated by the religious innovators of the sixteenth century, it would be absurd indeed to expect to meet with any thing resembling the works of faith. Protestantism, in one respect at least, is unearthly, for it cannot be traced by any visible monuments in the world. As a religion it founds no hospitals; private philanthropy, and the policy of government, must provide for such wants. The modern establishments are rather schools of science, often conducted by teachers who, like Epicurus, with the body make the spirit die, and establishments purely for the material advantage of society, without any view to the eternal interests of the sufferers who are relieved. The honour of having constructed even these poor and transient edifices, is claimed for by men with a vanity, that savours of former unblest times. Here are no holy images, no venerable habits, no solemn chants, no altars; but in their place long pompous and pedantic inscriptions, like that which the Moors placed over their hospital at Grenada, which extols the merit of its illustrious founders, and prays God not to leave them without due recompense. The grandeur and beauty of the ancient edifices may of course be sought for in vain; for when the poor had lost the eminent dignity which they had enjoyed in consequence of the power of the Church, and the principles of faith, that the asylums constructed for their accommodation should be in harmony with their new position in society, was but a natural and necessary result. Tenon, in his *Memoirs on the Hospitals of Paris*, has remarked, what an important effect the difference of religion produces in determining the construction of hospitals. In a Protestant country, he observes, there is no necessity for altars and images in each ward, or for a church and an altar within view of every ward. One minister, as he

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 249.

* A Discourse of Funeral Monuments, 115.

found in such cases, suffices for two thousand sick persons. A few tracts against Popery will do the rest. There is, therefore, no necessity to provide a convent for priests, or a convent for nuns, when one or two matrons, with adequate wages "to ensure their respectability," are sufficient to preside over the infirmary. Physicians in the last century, who visited England in order to examine the hospitals, came to the conclusion that they did not sufficiently provide for the delicacy which was required by the rule of Catholic manners in other countries, where there are always separate halls and galleries for exercise provided for the two sexes of convalescent. Moreover, such regular and solid structures could only arise when the action of the Catholic principles obviated the necessity of progressive enlargement, and secured provision for future ages, as well as for temporary wants.* Nor has the fate of these great institutions in other countries been without some influence from the general spirit of the modern civilization in which philanthropy and human beneficence have, to a certain degree, superseded the supernatural love and mercy, which constituted the soul of the ancient Catholic state. The philosophers, when they had plundered hospitals of the wealth bestowed by pious Christians in the middle ages, proposed to maintain them by taxes upon gaming-houses, by the receipts of theatres, in which religion was every night outraged, and the collections made through the instrumentality of balls and other profane amusements; for like Julian, though at first they were for abolishing all such institutions as favourable to idleness, and contrary to the maxims of an enlightened economy, an opinion which has had its advocates in England in our days, and that too among men of the highest legal dignity, they afterwards turned round, and, like the same emperor, endeavoured to demonstrate that their religious or political systems could produce similar establishments without any aid from the operations of the Catholic faith. These few institutions, which escaped in part from the general spoliation, were subjected to the administration of men, who found many objects to which their revenues might be applied, besides those to which they were originally destined by the blessed merciful. By dint of a lengthened and cunningly-devised system of persecution, the religious sisters

were generally constrained to yield their place to persons who discharged them for a pecuniary compensation; and the moral amelioration of the patients, the furthering the work of their eternal safety, ceased to be an object to which any effort or any influence was applied.

Our course in reference to the correspondence between Catholic manners during ages of faith and the beatitude of the merciful, is here terminated; and I believe the result must be a conviction in the mind of every one who has accompanied me, that it was complete; and that it is to these ages we must look back, in order to witness divine mercy acting through human agents with the most effective power, and in the most diversified forms of development.

No one, after perusing researches of this nature to any length, can suppose for an instant that the number of the merciful on earth has increased since those times, or kept pace with what is termed the progress of civilization and of moral philosophy. Whatever one may imagine the advance of mankind to have been in other respects, it is not a contemplation of its extent in regard to their increase which can have thrown the ancient Catholic order of things into that dark shade in which our popular writers have been pleased so generally to envelope it. These few fragments, in truth, should be enough to convince even observers the most cautious or prejudiced, that in respect to benignity, long suffering, forgiveness, and compassion, never was there beheld on the earth a state of society comparable to that which it formed; to convince them that never was the great attribute of the Deity, proclaimed in the sacred page, which saith that all his ways are mercy, imparted to so great a multitude of the human race, or exhibited in such a variety of combinations to counteract or alleviate the evil which is attached to the present condition of our nature. To speak of the recompense which more directly constituted the beatitude of these past ages, falls not within the limits of an inquiry like the present; since, as St. Bernardine of Sienna remarks, of the triple reward pledged to the merciful, two parts, the promise of glory and of remission of sins, relate to an order of things beyond the limits of historic illustration; and of the third, the promise of a multiplication of grace, it would be in vain to expect a more complete view than what we have already enjoyed; for where should we look for

* Tenon, *Mém. sur les Hôpitaux*.

evidence of its fulfilment, if we have not discovered it in the spirit of those who kept the choicest of their love for God, in the doctrine of blessed charity, as taught by all who explained to men their religious and social duties, in the conversation of those who sought to practise it, generations sinful, indeed, as a late poet saith, for Adam made all so, but tender-hearted, meek, and pitiful, in the mildness and forbearance of legislators and magistrates, in their willingness to permit the interference of the merciful in behalf of those who were obnoxious to legal penalties, in the visitation of prisoners, in the emancipation of the serfs, and the extirpation of slavery, in the spirit of mercy and humanity, which even predominated in war, in the efforts to screen the weak from the strong, made unceasingly by the clergy, who were as "nerves through which crept the else-unfelt oppressions of this earth;" in the principles and practice of a wise and compassionate tolerance, in the meek endurance and heroic forgiveness of injuries, in the prodigious charity of the affluent to the poor, in their alms, counsels, and labours of beneficence, and, finally, in the hospitals and other foundations which were designed to minister to the wants of the miserable, and to alleviate the sorrows of the human race.

Here was, indeed, proof of grace multiplied. Here was assuredly a present and truly divine remuneration. Further to penetrate into the mysterious retributions of the disciples of love would be to transgress the bounds allotted to us. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." But when? and from whom? What answer can history furnish? Alas! it will be one strange and fearful; for it will tell us that many of these generous benefactors whom we have seen pass, dispensing mercy, were, while on earth,

afflicted, ill requited, betrayed, oppressed, outraged; and if we pursue the inquiry further, and hope to find that at least posterity has come forward to make compensation by justice to their memory, the result will not be different. These ages are dark in name on earth, which accomplished all these prodigies of grace! What mercy hath any generation of insensate mortal creatures vouchsafed in return to the forgiving kings, whose faults only are remembered, while all their goodness is forgotten; or to the monks, who put an end to slavery, to mention but one out of their multiplied services, and who are proclaimed to have been the most useless of the human race? Where has been the mercy that was to repay the profuse alms, and the devoted service at the sick bed, and the repairing to distant lands to redeem captives, and all the acts of tender indefatigable pity by which the poor were delivered, and the nations rescued from darkness, and the prisons opened, and the fetters broken, and the whole servile race brought out of unmitigated misery to the consoling light and freedom of the Gospel? But still the word is unchangeable: it is a pledge which neither time nor "the long-tainted flood of evil through centuries over earth's slight pageant rolling," availeth to destroy; for all is written in the tablet of an everlasting memory, and that which is alone desirable remains secured for ever. Mercy from him whose smile is the light that kindleth the universe, whose justice is the beauty for which all thirst, shall these suppliant hosts receive before the winged throne in dazzling immortality, when the lure whirled in the rolling spheres, on which their eyes had been for ever fixed, shall descend, silent, alone, in that last, ineffable benediction of glory which unfolds heaven.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

Mores Catholici:

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

BOOK VIII.



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MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE EIGHTH BOOK.

CHAP. I.



WHILE the heavens are showing forth the glory of God, and the firmament is declaring the work of his hands, the records of men are fulfilling a purpose no less admirable, in attesting the operation and power of his grace,—ministry, that may not unjustly be styled divine, like that of the angel seen in mystic vision by the great contemplatist and poet of the three worlds, who, as he relates, when day was sinking, appeared before him, standing on the brink of the flame, with gladness in his looks. For he who traced in chronicles the ways of men in believing days of yore, and he who taught the wisdom of the schools,—the poet, too, conversant with the people's thoughts, and those who in written monuments transmitted what the middle ages from experience knew—all with one voice, whose lively clearness, we might truly add, far surpassed our human, sang, "Blessed are the clean of heart."

This beatitude, say the scholastic commentators, is justly placed in sixth degree, since, on the sixth day, man was created in the image of his Maker, which image is obscured by sinful blot, but purged by grace, which prepares him for ascent to heaven; and while the purity which yields it implies the possession of the other precious seeds

of blessed life, the same is no less necessarily included in each of them; for, saith St. Ambrose, citing one instance as sufficient proof, "he who shows mercy loses the fruit of mercy, unless he be merciful with a clean heart; for if he seek boasting, there is no fruit from his mercy."

The path now before us leads still higher than any which we hitherto have followed, and yet it will not separate us from the earthly course; for though divine, it is no less a human theme, and one essential to all studies that have historical knowledge, within certain limits, for their end; since, without accurate observation here, many things which are presented in the books of the middle ages, in the various institutions which flourished during that period, and in the different monuments of art which have survived the wreck of time, must remain inexplicable; for, whether the question relate to a Charlemagne founding monasteries, and presiding over the Christian world, to an Edward Confessor, legislating, to a Godfrey, mounting the throne of Jerusalem, to a St. Louis, hastening to the relief of the holy land, to a Ferdinand, recovering Spain from the Mahometans, to a Gregory the Seventh, enforcing the ecclesiastical discipline, to an Innocent the Third, according to nations which turned to it with one voice for protection from the violence of despotic power,

the protection of the Holy See, to a Thomas of Canterbury, dying for the freedom of the church, to a Bernard, directing the counsels of princes, to a Boniface, departing to convert heathen nations, to a Bruno, retiring into the desert, to a Dunstan, substituting monks for seculars, to a Francis, embracing poverty, to a Dominick, opposing heresy, to a Guercino, painting for altars, to a count of Anjou, building churches, or only to a duke of Aquitaine, taking up his pilgrim's staff, —there will arise problems that admit of no solution, if we do not take into account the conviction and the doctrine, which prevailed universally during those ages, respecting the beatitude of the clean of heart. Nor let any one disdain our solicitude, if it be remarked also, that some of those high pleasures, arising from the imagination and from poetry, are not altogether unconcerned with the view to which this subject leads. Who will not feel a charm in learning what were the thoughts, the religious and philosophic thoughts, of those different great, heroic, or engaging personages, with whose external form and character historians or poets may have made him long familiar? How delightful to be introduced to them in their meditative hours; to hear their calm soliloquies, or their conversations philosophical, on the subjects which have an equal interest for ourselves? Then indeed the ruins that are scattered everywhere will be able to excite in the mind a useful remembrance, and in the heart a strong emotion. It will no longer be the artist only who visits with advantage the rock, beneath which hermits once were sheltered, the poor grey abbey, tottering to its fall, the feudal towers, to which it so often looked for protection, and the ancient seats of just authority, that so long sheltered peaceful holy kings; no philosopher, no Christian, will then ever pass them by without a wise reflection, or without a tear. Researches of this nature, it is true, cannot be concluded in brief space, and without labour; we shall besides in the beginning have to traverse ground that will seem to those who are familiar with the instructions of faith, as void of any literary interest, from its appearing at the first glance to yield only what every book of devotion can supply; but they will view it differently, if they keep in mind that our object in approaching it is to hear those speak who are seldom interrogated by others; and that the authors who address them will be

men of the middle ages, whom, perhaps, they have never met before, excepting on the page of Dante, or of some other mighty genius of the olden time. They will then feel that the words, independent of the truths divine which they convey, acquire a solemnity purely human, which men of hearts like ours, unsanctified and blind, may pretend without folly to appreciate; for they are those of authors whose volumes are not always accessible, though their glory lives yet on the tongue of poets, historians and philosophers of a past world; men so venerable and great on all accounts, that whatever is uttered by them has a distinct value, in consideration of its having fallen from their lips. Listening to their discourse, indeed, will make our progress slow; but, as Plato observes, in reply to some who were for-avoiding delay, "We must not refuse to pursue the longest road, which may lead with greatest certainty to the object of our inquiry; for it would be ridiculous to use every effort in exposing with the greatest exactness and clearness things of the least worth, and not to esteem the greatest as worthy of being determined with the most precision, and while the greatest subject of learning is that which instructs us in the idea of the highest good, assuredly there is no result of historical knowledge more important than that which enables us to learn in what manner the men of former times were able to conceive and secure it. Still I am aware, as Wadding says in the beginning of his eleventh volume, that the things which are here to be published respecting the admirable piety of men and women, may seem frivolous to those whose ears are accustomed to grand descriptions of republics, to narratives of battles and other military operations; but, as he continues, the philosophy of Christ has this peculiar property, that while nothing is more contemptible than its first, nothing is more divine than its subsequent aspect; for it inflames minds, not with the thirst of blood and slaughter, or with the cupidity of vain glory; but with humanity and gentleness, and the love of solid and true virtue."*

There was, however, a difficulty greater still, that might have discouraged us from pursuing this history any further; for here we enter upon an investigation that will lead immediately to holy ground, towards which men of hearts like ours should

* *Annal. Minorum*, tom. xi.

pause before they dare so much as to turn even their eyes. Yet I was tempted to proceed, when I considered that in this journey through the literature of past ages, as in that of life, the profane may join the company of blessed pilgrims, and pass in at their side, where alone they would have never thought of entering; that then, on their return, they may describe what they have seen, and repeat what they have heard; and that to their rhapsodies perpetual sober men may turn a willing ear, as though they could discern what is holy on their lips, so that even the simple wanderer who strays uncommissioned like myself to explore the beauties, and inhale the perfume of the ancient world of faith, may approach it without presumption, and yet with confidence;

"For saints have hands that pilgrim's hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmer's kiss."

The Angel of the School, Richard of St. Victor, Bernard, and Francis—such are the deathless minds which leave, where they have past, a tract of light that will sustain us now. With them, by aid of sentences transcribed, our souls shall know communion, till, as the poet saith, "from that glorious intercourse, as from a mine of magic store, we shall draw words which are weapons; round the hearts of some there shall grow the adamantine armour of their power, and from their fancy wings of golden hue." Therefore let this book be taken up as if the limbs of him who wrote it had long been scattered in the dust, and it had been only copied, as in effect it is, from some huge and antique volume, bound by two solemn clasps, "as neither to be opened nor laid by but with due thought profound."

*Omnia bona corporis ordinantur ad bona animæ sicut ad finem.** This axiom, laid down by the Angel of the School, is a key to unlock the secrets of the middle ages; for during the predominance of faith, all goods of the body, all important institutions, all offices, all combinations of intellectual and material things that received the highest sanction, were ordained to cleanness of heart as to their end. Therefore, in order to comprehend the history of those ages, we must previously learn what was understood by cleanness of heart, and what were the precepts generally

given for its acquirement. When this point has been ascertained, it will be required to show in what manner and to what extent that interior disposition affected the course of human events, and the institutions and manners of society, after which a wide and truly enchanting field will open before us, while tracing the immediate and temporal verification of the divine promise, that those who attained to it should see God.

"As health is the nature of the body," says St. Bernard, "so purity is the nature of the heart; for with a disturbed eye God cannot be seen, and the human heart is made for this end, that it should see its Creator."*

By cleanness of heart was understood, therefore, a restoration of the original state of the human character, and consequently something very different from that condition of conscience at which men arrive by natural means, the purity of which may be estimated by the one simple observation, that there is no inconsistency between the sense of the modern proposition, "that the majority of men, by a happy necessity, are constrained to be moral;" and the conclusion to which Socrates came, that men do much more evil than good, beginning from their childhood,† testimony of human reason to its own misery, which is borne also by the ancient poet, who declares "that few there are whom just God loves, or ardent virtue raises to the sky."‡

The purity of heart which led to blessed vision, was understood in ages of faith to consist in a conformity with the divine image; but in order to supply a wisdom that was practical, and free from ambiguity in terms, it was necessary that some further explanation, in the form of axioms, should be laid down; for, as St. Thomas observes, "it would not suffice for beatitude that man should be assimilated to God in regard to power, unless he were assimilated to him in regard to goodness."§ Moreover, as St. Gregory remarks, "God is holy; but of a holiness invisible, inaccessible, incomprehensible. God is not holy in the manner that we ought to be; and holiness in him is not what it ought to be in us. For in us, holiness is inseparable from penitence; which can no more accord with God than sin. In us, a part of holiness

* De Divin. Serm. XVI.

† Plato, *Hippias Major*.

‡ *Æneid*, tom. vi. 129.

§ Sum. p. 1. Q. xi. a. 4.

• St. Thom. sum. 9. 11. art. 5.

consists in subjection, dependence, obedience ; for this is what sanctifies us ; and in God it is exactly the contrary. We are holy by despising ourselves ; and God is holy in glorifying himself : he is holy in an entire and perfect possession of his beatitude, and we are holy by patience in our misery." Nor is this all : for, as the Angel of the School saith, "If any one should seek to be like God in respect to justice, as if by his own virtue, and not by the virtue of God, he would sin ; or, if he were to seek as the last end that similitude with God which is given by grace, wishing to have it by the virtue of his nature, and not by the divine assistance, according to the ordinance of God, he would sin."*

Already, therefore, we may begin to perceive how well guarded from error, at the very first step on the way to perfection, were the men of those ages, and what a protection was afforded to society from the calamities and horrors, to which a want of Catholic instruction on this very point has frequently led in later times. Again, say these high teachers, "the holiness of man must be something different from that of the incorporeal Divinity." And here I would invite the reader to remark, that when treating on this difference, the great Catholic philosophers of the middle ages evince a clearness and good sense, which some of our contemporaries, who have not had a personal acquaintance with their writings, are apparently but little prepared to find in them. Of the great leading mysteries of our moral nature, as far as relates to an observation of facts, the ancient sages were not ignorant. The Pythagoreans said, "that men should aim at purification, which consisted in separating, as far as possible, the mind from the body, and accustoming it to dwell by itself, free from the contagion of the body."† "The great object of a philosopher," says Plato, "must be the purification of his mind ; and this purification can only be effected by separating, as far as possible, the soul from the body, and accustoming it to live and dwell by itself, and delivering it from the body as if from chains ; and this full and perfect deliverance is named death, and this should be the object of every real philosopher's desire."‡ Cicero, too, in the first book of the *Tusculans*, speaks of

separating the mind, as far as possible, from the body, which is learning to die ; and he says, that "while we remain on earth, this will be similar to a celestial life." Later philosophers without the church have expressed the same convictions. "Hitherto," says Novalis, "soul has prevailed only here and there ; when will it have universal sway ?"

The similarity between these views and the Catholic doctrine, must have struck every one ; but it is no less clear, that there is much to modify and change before they can be brought to a real and complete agreement with it. Certainly, as Savonarola desires the philosophers of Florence to remark, whatever the ancient sages laid down respecting purity of heart, and the necessity of purging the mind from the misdirected love of sensible things, is not only enforced by the Catholic religion, but infinitely extended and reduced to practice in a manner that would have been incredible to them. It would be wholly useless to adduce evidence in proof of a fact so generally known as the conviction of men during ages of faith, that the passions might become domestic foes, against which it would be impossible to provide too many securities. Their language with respect to the danger of sense is more frequently taxed with exaggeration than with leniency ; for in truth they saw connections which the men of later times cannot or will not discern ; they knew what was the genius of pleasure, how unlike in reality to her appearance : they saw her deformed and cruel, and it seems as if they continually heard her horrid reply to the poor victim who, too late, discovered her treachery. "Sink with me, then ; we two will sink on the wide waves of ruin, even as a vulture and a snake, outspent, drop, twisted in inextricable fight, into a shoreless sea."

Nevertheless, of the light in which the passions were regarded by the Catholic instructors, and of the relative position of sense and spirit in the Catholic philosophy, the moderns are in general profoundly ignorant. They have yet to learn that the abuse, not the use, of nature, was condemned by it. The guides who apply that medicine to the intelligence of men, only observe that when the mind revolts from God, the senses in their turn revolt from the mind. In this situation they remark, that the body, though willingly, yet impatiently follows the senses ; and as Marsilius Ficinus observes, "that thence arise the most

* Sum. p. 1. Q. lxiii. art. 3.

† Jamblichus Adhortat. ad Philosoph. cap. 13.

‡ Plato, *Phædo*, 67.

monstrous opinions, and manners the most foul and execrable.* These guides may remark indeed, with Plato, that "the body, through its wants, is the subject of a thousand occupations to deprive us of leisure; that the infirmities which it entails upon us, prevent us often from the search of truth; and that the passions with which it moves us, fills us with a multitude of delusions, so that we cannot see the real nature of things; for that wars, and insurrections, and battles, have no other origin but the body, and the desires arising from it."† Where expressions are stronger, and such as seem to warrant our concluding that the very use of nature, and the work of the Creator himself, are reprobated, a closer inspection will convince us, that these arise merely from a consideration of some peculiarity of circumstance, involving danger, of some accidental incongruity produced by the position of an individual, or perhaps from a willing renouncement of what is known to be intrinsically good and innocent, in order to satisfy the desires of a generous and feeling heart, as in the instance related by St. Martin of Tours, of the young maiden, whom Injuriosus, a senator of Auvergne, sought in marriage, and who exclaimed on her bridal day, "Would to heaven that the kisses of my nurses had been given to me in my shroud! The pomps of the world disgust me when I think of my Redeemer pierced upon the cross. I cannot bear the sight of diadems glittering with precious stones when I think, of his thorny crown!" Annihilation, however, or the rejection of any part of the Creator's work, as evil in itself, was a process unknown in the philosophy of the clean of heart; and so far were the Catholic instructors from imagining that sense is opposed to the spiritual life, that, according to their unanimous voice, the latter must commence with it. St. Bernard affirms this expressly. "As we are carnal," saith he, "our desires and our lives must commence by the flesh; and if this flesh be well regulated, if it be contained in order, perfecting itself by degrees under the guidance of grace, it will finally owe to the spirit the compliment of its perfection. It is not that which is spiritual which goes in the first line, but that which is animal. We must first bear the resemblance of the earthly man, before we bear that of the heavenly man."‡ "Qui futurus erat etiam carne

spiritalis," says St. Augustin; "factus est mente carnalis."* Nor was it only in the first steps of the spiritual life that these guides accepted the attendance of sense. They required it during the arduous progress to consummate the union of the soul with God. Let us hear Hugo of St. Victor: "There is a certain medium to which the body ascends, that it may approach to spirit; and again, to which the spirit descends, that it may approach to body. Unless Moses had ascended, and God descended, they would not have met. Thus the spirit also ascends, and God descends, in the same manner as the body had ascended and the spirit descended. The body ascends by sense, the spirit descends by sensuality. The spirit ascends by contemplation, and God descends by revelation."† Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect; but as we proceed further, we shall have a more fitting occasion for hearing his sublime words. The passions, therefore, were to be directed, not extirpated; and St. Clement of Alexandria cites, with an approval which would have been echoed by all spiritual guides, the words of Plato in the third book of his Republic: "Επιμελίσθαι σώματος δέω ψυχῆς ἕνεκα ἀρμονίας."‡ "Passions, when they are consequent to reason," says the Angelic Doctor, "are good; they exercise a twofold influence, by redundancy and by election; that is to say, when the superior part of the soul is intensely moved towards something, the inferior part also follows its motion, and thus the passion existing in the sensitive appetite is consequently a sign of the intensity of the will, and indicates a greater moral goodness. In another manner also they act, by way of election; that is, when a man chooses with the judgment of reason to be affected by some passion, that he may work more promptly by the co-operation of the sensitive appetite; and thus the passion of the soul adds to the goodness of the action."§ If the body were annihilated, and soul to have universal sway, it is not so certain that the consequence would be a paradise on earth. The scholastic philosophers remarked, that the soul is susceptible of some kinds of evil delight, which cannot be traced to the senses; as when it is delighted with pride, without any imagination. For the senses cannot represent this to it, nor can it be thought to be white or black, harmonious or harsh,

* Marsil. Ficin. Epist. Lib. ii.
† Plato, Phædo, 66.
‡ Bern. de Amore Dei.

* De Civ. Dei.
† Hugo S. Vict. de Unione Corporis et Spiritus.
‡ Stromat. Lib. iv. c. 4.
§ St. Thom. Sum. p. 1. Q. xxiv. art. 3.

sweet or bitter, odoriferous or of unpleasant odour, soft or hard. There are indeed, say they, more kinds of delight, in which the soul is delighted without the senses, than those to which they are instrumental.* Nor is this all; for the very difficulty of reconciling the use of passions with obedience to the eternal reason, was said by the schoolmen to conduce to the perfection of man. St. Augustin remarks, that the passion of mercy serves reason; and St. Thomas observing that the Stoics represented all passions of the soul as evil, says, "If we name passions simply, all the movements of the sensitive appetite, it appertains to the perfection of human good, that these passions should be moderated by reason; for, since the good of man consists in reason as the root, that good will be so much the more perfect, as it can be applied to more things which agree with man; therefore no one can doubt but that it belongs to the perfection of moral good that the acts of the exterior members should be directed by the rule of reason."†

The angel of the school shrinks not from the most delicate and subtle investigations here, and solves a difficulty in the way of reconciling cleanness of heart with conformity to the present disposition of nature in a manner most strikingly characteristic of the bright school whose hallowed light shows all things beautiful and pure. "Some of the ancient doctors," saith he "considering the nature of concupiscence, supposed that in the state of innocence things had been otherwise ordained;" and St. Gregory Nyssen said that the human race would have been multiplied as the angelic, and that it was only from foreseeing the fall and its consequences that God created man male and female. But this is not to speak rationally; for the things which are natural to man were neither taken away nor given by sin: but it is manifest that the multiplication of the human race was ordained naturally as that of other creatures, connected with which two things are to be considered,—that which the order of nature requires, and a certain deformity of immoderate concupiscence, which was not in the state of innocence when the inferior faculties were subject to reason. Not that purity was passionless, as some say; for all sensible delight was so much the greater, as nature was purer and more susceptible; but that the power of concupiscence did not inordinately prevail in

despite of reason, as one temperate in food has no less pleasure than one intemperate: and to this agree the words of St. Augustin, that "the state of innocence did not exclude delight, but only the tyranny of sense and sin-bred disquietude of mind; and therefore in that state continence was not laudable, when there was fecundity without sin."* St. Augustin says that "original rectitude consisted in perfect subjection of body to the mind;" and the Catholic instructors show that this subjection in general may be in some degree re-established by maintaining the rational faculty in subjection to God, the eternal reason. Modern philosophers remark with Novalis, that by faith man arms and strengthens all his powers, and that susceptibility and passion become durable and spiritual actions. The scholastic teachers who distinguish fourteen beatitudes of soul and body, seven of which they say, relating to the body, cannot be perfected on earth, but will be enjoyed in perfection hereafter,† would have found no difficulty in subscribing to the opinion of a late philosopher, who says, "The sentient principle may adhere to us in another state, and I sometimes imagine that many of those powers which have been called instinctive, belong to the more refined clothing of the spirit, which death may not destroy, though the organs of gross sensation, the nerves and brain, will be destroyed."‡

In what, then, was to consist the conformity which makes clean the heart of man? Let Albert the Great reply to this question in the name of Catholic generations: "The image of God, in the soul, consists," saith he, "in these three powers—reason, memory, and will; and so long as these are not wholly impressed by God, the soul is not deiform according to its primary creation; for God is the form of the soul by whom it ought to be impressed as if wax by a seal, and stamped as if stamped with a seal; and this cannot be effected unless reason be perfectly, as far as its capacity permits, illuminated with the knowledge of God, which is the highest truth, and the will be perfectly affected to loving the highest goodness, and the memory be fully absorbed in contemplating and enjoying eternal felicity. Therefore all phantasms, species, images, and forms of things detached from the idea of God, must all be expelled from the mind, that your

* S. Anselmi de Similitudinibus, cap. 20.

† I. Q. xxiv. art. 3.

* St. Thom. Sum. p. I. 9. xcvi. art. 2.

† S. Anselmi de Similit. cap. 47.

‡ Sir H. Davy, Dialog. iv. 215.

exercise concerning God within yourself may depend wholly on the sole naked intelligence, affection, and will." He then proceeds to show that the end of all exercises is to intend and rest in the Lord God within ourselves by the purest intelligence and the most devout affection—an exercise which is not carried on in fleshly organs and in exterior senses, but by that which constitutes man—intelligence and affection. Therefore he concludes, as long as man plays with phantasms and senses, so as to rest in them (for that is undoubtedly his meaning), he cannot be said to have escaped from the motions and limits of his bestial nature, or of that part of him which he has in common with beasts; because these know and are affected by phantasms, and by such sensitive or sensible species, and not otherwise, from not having a higher force of soul. "But it is different," he adds, "with man, created according to intelligence and affection, and free-will, in the image and similitude of God; in each of which faculties he ought to be immediately impressed and united with him."* "The soul," says Louis of Blois, "disengaged from all affection contrary to order, tends naturally towards its principle, which is God; for God is the natural place of the soul, and it is only there that it can find rest. Let us seek for purity, let us seek for light, let us remember our greatness! Let us consider that the image of God is imprinted on our souls; let us unite ourselves to him by a true charity, as were united to him the holy apostles, the holy martyrs, and the confessors, and the innumerable virgins who now contemplate him face to face in heaven, in the company of his holy mother, the first in sanctity, the first in all perfections after her divine Son."†

These hallowed teachers proceed, however, to define the grace of this beatitude in more specific terms. "With two wings," says Thomas à Kempis, "is man raised above the earth, namely, simplicity and purity—simplicity in the intention, purity in the affection—simplicity intending God, purity apprehending and tasting him." St. Bernard says, that "this purity of heart consists in two things—in seeking the glory of God, and the utility of our neighbour. For the rational power to be clean, it should abstain," he remarks, "from three things—from duplicity of intention, falsity of opinion, and depravity of thought; for the concu-

piscible power to be clean, it should be pure from three things—from terrene affection, obscene delight, and hurtful operation; and for the irascible power to be pure, it should be clean from the fear that causes an evil humiliation, which leads fallen man to idolatry, astrology, sortilege, and other superstitious which horribly stain the human heart."* Finally, St. Thomas supplies a definition in few comprehensive words, saying, "Every human work is right and virtuous when it agrees with the rule of divine love; but when it disagrees with this rule, it is neither good nor right."†

While listening thus, we can conceive how each term of these definitions might be illustrated by what history exhibits; for, recurring to what St. Bernard says, and remarking at the same time with Richard of St. Victor, that the spirit of man is sometimes borne to something good, to which is annexed something carnal, which delights humanity and secretly betrays the mind, and it knoweth it not,‡ we might show from history how pure and undivided was become the human heart. Rodriguez furnishes a most remarkable example, where he says that St. Ignatius once examined himself to inquire how long his affliction would last if the society which he had instituted were to be dissolved; and it seemed to him provided it was not his fault, that he should want only a quarter of an hour's recollection and prayer to free himself from all the trouble that this would give him. Such was the qualification indicated by St. Bernard; and how unearthly pure must have been the heart that thus possessed it! how detached from all finite things, and dissolved in the love and vision of eternal God! O how bitter, to men who are only cleansed without, is the thought that any work of their creation should have an end! See with what intense passion, with what earnest affection of personal interest misunderstood, the authors of systems opposed to Catholic faith have in every age pursued their favourite schemes of innovation: they want only a quarter of an hour to recover serenity?—Say, rather, the eternal years. Such is the contrast between men who see themselves and those who see God. In the sixth book we remarked the delicate sense of justice which existed in the hearts of men in ages of faith; but where shall we now find words to describe their purity? Let us hear Richard of St. Victor: "The Spirit of the

* Albert. Mag. de Adhærendo Deo, cap. 3, 4.
† Louis de Blois, chap. v. Institution Spirituelle

* S. Bern. Serm. x. † Op. iv. c. 1.
‡ In Cantica Cantico.

Lord," saith he, "daily in his elect tempers insensibly the multitudinous and multiform affections of the human heart, and resolves them into one harmony, and, like a skilful harper who extends and tightens the chords of his instrument, so doth it reduce them to a certain concord, until a mellifluous and ineffably sweet melody resounds in the ears of the Lord like the sound of many harpers harping on their harps." And then he proceeds, making use of daily experience, arguing from what he finds on earth, to suggest an idea of heaven. "For," he continues, "if such a wondrous harmony and multitudinous concert can rise from one heart out of such a plurality of affections, what will be the concordant consonance of the celestial spirits in such a multitude of angels, and of holy souls exulting and praising him who liveth for ever and ever."*

St. Clement of Alexandria had described this disposition of soul as belonging to his gnostic or true Christian, "who, whether eating or drinking, or whatsoever doing, even when dreaming, does and thinks what is holy, that at all times he may be pure for prayer; who with angels prays as he is himself angelic, and never without a holy guardian; for if he prays alone, he has a chorus of saints standing with him."†

The serene angelic purity of the hallowed heart was thought to manifest itself even on the countenance; and hence the care which the profound artists of the middle age evinced to transfer the utmost grace and beauty into all their representations of sacred subjects. "I am indignant," says St. Anselm, "against bad painters, when I see them paint our Lord under a deformed figure."‡

Savonarola, from an observation of the effect of the mysteries of faith upon the human countenance, draws an argument to prove the divinity of the Catholic religion. "This external expression, which so often led to memorable conversions, arises," he says, "from a supernatural beauty of mind which imparts to the body a corresponding grace. The faith and love which produce this exterior beauty cannot be a deception, for it is capable of leading men to a celestial life, and falsehood cannot thus penetrate the heart of man:"§—as creatures approach to the beauty of God the fairer they become; "for," he observes, in one of his sermons cited by Rio, "if you take two women in

this assembly equally beautiful as to form, it will be the holiest of the two that will excite most admiration amongst the spectators, and the palm will not fail to be decreed to her even by carnal men."*

"If the body be beautiful," asks Diego de Stella, "doth not this beauty proceed from the soul? Take away the soul, and what is viler than the body? If the body, then, be thus beautiful, how much more oughtest thou to think thy soul beautiful, and to love that which is the cause of the body's beauty."† This beauty of holy souls is compared by the teachers of wisdom to that of a sanctuary: "His mind," saith one, "had all the quiet, purity, and beauty of a temple;" "The soul that hath God within it," saith another, "is a temple of God, in which divine mysteries are celebrated."‡ Even their chronicles are full of instances to illustrate the justice of their similitude: "In Gervine," says the monastic historian of St. Riquier, "was fulfilled that true sentence, 'Ubi fidelis anima, ibi est templum Dei.'"§ It is a beauty commemorated even on their solemn tombs, as may be witnessed in the epitaph on Hildegard, queen of Charlemagne, in the church of blessed Arnulf at Metz:—

"Huic tam data fuit florentis gratia formæ,
Qua non occiduo pulchrior ulla floret.
Attamen hanc speciem superabant lumina cordis,
Simplicitasque animæ, interiorque decor."

If proof were to be demanded of the pre-dominance of this intellectual beauty in ages of faith, one need not look farther than to the offices of the church; for the love with which they were so generally regarded, as we observed in a former place, most clearly proves that they corresponded with the hearts of men. And here I cannot refrain from proposing that a comparison be instituted between the solemn hallowed light of words, so bright and heavenly, which issued from the choir in those days, when even every rustic village church heard the regular office duly sung, and the new litanies which England at some altars hears repeated more frequent than the names of Mary and of the saints. The sheep, we are told, (poor witless ones!) are fed with what their taste approves, while what is canonical must never pass their lips in public, for fear the dark intruder should deride. O patience! that canst endure to

* Richardi S. Victoris de Contemplatione, p. 1. Lib. iii. c. 24.

† Stromat. Lib. vii. c. 12.

‡ S. Anselmi cur Deus Homo, cap. 2.

§ Triumph. Crucis, Lib. ii. 12.

* Serm. on Frid. after 3d Sund. of Lent.

† On the Contempt of the World, Part. I. 73.

‡ S. Bernardi de interiori Domo, cap. iv.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Rich. cap. xxvi. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

put to silence the angelic thoughts and the seraphic aspirations that of yore were uttered within Catholic churches, as they are still wherever faith prevails, in order to comply with the false wise, who say that hunger of new viands tempts their flock, and that the more remote from ancient pastures the stragglers wander, so much the more they come home to the sheepfold: so customs, laws, and offices are changed, and vulgar coarse sentences provided—held in great esteem as pure, forsooth, because every blot of sin mentioned here and there in Scripture is enumerated broadly in continuous strain with prayer to be delivered from it; and so there be no lack of words, detached and loosely strung together from the book of God, the composer has won the meed he sought. But not alone the fathers who sat in council, and the holy hooded men who served the sanctuary, but the unlettered peasants in the middle ages would have rejected offices like these; they would have been judged not only offensive to refined and to scholastic ears, but also to the instinct of the pure.

But, for we have wandered, let us seek the forward path again.

Sweet hues of saintly lustre were spread over the serene aspect of the clean heart, so multiplied that of each it would be hardly possible to tell. Its deep humility deserves, however, an especial notice. "How can you with a sound conscience call yourself the chief of sinners?" was a question put to the seraphic father by one of his blest fellowship; to whom he said, "If Christ had shown such mercy to the most wicked of men, I think he would have been more grateful to God than I am."*

Again, it would be difficult for men who have not been admitted to a participation in its faith to estimate with justice its sincerity, since they of the world are conversant only with such hearts as verify what the Master of the Sentences observes,—that "lying hypocrisy follows the rejection of faith, that in words may be the piety which the conscience hath lost."† In relation to conversational intercourse, there is another occasion for remarking the supernatural influence of this purity; for of that abject temper which fears to offend God by actions, and, as if in compensation, revels in the abuse of the unruly member, gloating on such images as show humanity in closest alliance with sordid creatures of the earth, we find no trace in

these ages, when desire of beatitude necessarily produced a Platonic delicacy of expression. No one who dwelt within tidings of the school could ever fancy that, provided he abstained from works that have no relish of salvation in them, he might resemble Diogenes in speech.

Peter Aldobrandini used to say, that a person who had contracted the cynic style, whatever might be the purity of his manners in other respects, did not deserve the name of man, as he must have lost all sense of the dignity of his nature. The sentence of the great apostle against evil words, and the comment of St. Bernard, who held the hearer guilty as the wretch who uttered them, quelled the tyrannous gust of those discoloured souls which loved the confines of impurity.*

With respect to that development of the heart's renovation which consisted in a scrupulous adherence to the dictates of conscience, it is obvious that the history of the ages of faith would furnish an immense field for interesting and curious discourse. "A man ought rather to suffer death than consent to sin venially:"—this is what St. Thomas teaches.† And even profane history has continual occasion to tell of men who made their lives conform to this rule. In fact, wherever we read of one like Thomas Welles, abbot of Croyland in the reign of Henry III., *vir venerabilis et eximie sanctitatis*,‡ (and where do we find a page in the annals of the middle ages without allusion to such men?) we may be assured that this was the solemn and inflexible principle of his life. Let us hear Louis of Blois, who in few words lays open the heart of Catholics in ages of faith: "Where is that fear of God which is to exist for ever—the perfect fear? Attend!—I am about to propose a question which I beg you will address to yourself: If God should come in the midst of us, and should enable us to hear his voice (and certainly he never ceases to do so in his Scriptures), and should say to each of us, 'You wish to commit sin: well, then, commit sin; do what you like; refuse yourself nothing; seize whatever pleases you; destroy whatever gives you offence; if you should be inclined to rob, rob—if to strike, strike—if to serve such or such an object, serve it; let no one resist you; let no one say to you, What are you doing? do not that; why have you done that?'"

* S. Bonavent. Vita S. Franc.

† Petr. Lombard. Lib. Sent. Prolog.

* Drexelius de Univ. Vitiis Linguae, xxxiv.

† In IV. Sent. Dist. 19. 992. a. 3.

‡ Hist. Croyland, in Rer. Angl. Script. tom. i.

Let every thing that can flatter you, be yours; live in the midst of this abundance of every thing that can please you, not only for a time, but for ever;—only, you must never behold my face!—my brethren, you shudder!—well, then, this shudder is that perfect fear of which I speak. It teaches me that it dwells in your heart, and it is that which shall endure for endless ages. Why would your hearts be seized with such fear if God should say, 'You shall never see my face; you shall abound in all earthly goods; you shall swim in delights; I do not force you to renounce them; you shall keep all that—what more do you wish?' This chaste and perfect fear would mourn no less, would shed no fewer tears, and it would cry out, 'Ah, Lord, take away from me all the rest, but suffer me to behold thy face! God of virtue,' would it cry with the Psalmist, 'convert us, and show us thy face, and we shall be saved'."^{*}

The object we are now following might naturally lead us on the ground of penitential history, to speak of that desire to cancel sin of which we formerly gave instances. But, without retracing our steps, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to produce a few examples of that sensitiveness of conscience which arose from purity of heart, or from the strong desire of attaining to it. Now what do the records of the middle ages attest? We can judge from a few specimens respecting the produce that might be gathered from this deep abundant mine. Passages, then, of this kind occur. Brother Astorg, a monk of Mans Ada, of the Cistercian order, came humbly into the presence of Pope Innocent III., saying, that while in the world, exercising the office of a physician, he gave medicine to a certain monk, but being engaged in other affairs, he delayed returning to him. The other, after taking the medicine, neglected to use the care which he had enjoined, refrained not from things he had prohibited, and in consequence incurred death. Astorg, though by advice of his abbot raised to sacred orders, suffered from the reproach of his conscience, because, if he had practised more exact diligence towards the patient, perhaps he would not have died. The pope, however, commanded him to minister under the divine fear in the orders which he had received, and only to be more diligent in his observance of the rule in consideration of what had occurred."[†] Again, the same

pontiff is consulted respecting a certain monk who, believing that he could cure a woman who had a tumour in the throat, by opening it with an instrument as a surgeon, performed that operation; and when the tumour had subsided, he prescribed to her not to expose herself to the wind in any manner; but the woman, neglecting his orders when the harvest was reaping, exposed herself incautiously to the wind, so that much blood came from the opening, and the woman died, acknowledging that it was by her own imprudence. The question now was, whether that monk, being a priest, could lawfully exercise the sacerdotal office. The pope replied, that although he sinned in taking another's office upon himself, yet, if he did it through pity and not through cupidity, and if he was well skilled in the surgical art, and if he gave all his attention, he is not to be condemned for the woman's fault, so grievously that, after worthy satisfaction, he should not be received to mercy and permitted to celebrate. Otherwise all sacerdotal office is to be interdicted to him absolutely. Another consultation is to this effect: A certain scholar, fearing that robbers had entered the hospice where he lay, taking a little sword, rose from his bed, went to seek a light, and, at the door, found the thief, who began to struggle with him, threw him on the ground, and wounded him almost to death; the scholar, repelling force by force, wrested the sword from the robber and struck him again, but still with moderation; upon which the thief took flight, and escaped. At break of day his fellow-scholars sought the robber, and found him wounded; they then brought him before the potesta of Vicenza, to whom he denied having been the robber. The potesta sent his officers to the same scholar, to ask what he knew, who gave up the short weapon which he had taken from him, and also the shoes which he had taken off his feet lest he should make a noise, but said he knew nothing more. The potesta gave up the robber to suffer the penalty, who, after a cruel punishment, went to a convent and there died after three days. The scholar, moved with compunction and fear, desired to know whether he could be promoted to holy orders; and the pope decided that there was no impediment.*

Dithmar, the predecessor of St. Adalbert, in the see of Prague, in the tenth century.

* Louis de Blois, Psychagog. Lib. ii. cap. 6.

† Epist. Inn. III. Lib. xii. 60.

; * Epist. Lib. xiv. 159.

exhibited terrible remorse on his death-bed: "Alas!" said he, "how changed am I from what I once was, and from what I could wish to be! Wretch that I am, I have lost my days! With an all-merciful God my other offences might be pardonable; but when I consider the crimes of the people committed to my charge—a people whose only guide is their pleasure, whose only law is their own inclination,—when I consider all this, then, indeed, I bewail my apathy; and I must bewail it through eternity! And now I am doomed to take the downward path to a region where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." "Dithmar," says the modern historian who cites these words, "was a man of strict morals; he had the learning and gravity becoming his station; and his only fault, the only cause of his self-condemnation, was want of zeal."*

Gerlac, a monk of Walchenrieth, explained his case in the following manner to Pope Innocent III.:—He said that when he used to celebrate mass he frequently through negligence, pronounced the words of the canon in a disordered manner, on account of which he sometimes repeated twice those words and other things which the priest is bound to perform with the utmost care. Therefore, being moved with vehement grief, he cut off the end of one finger of his left hand. The pope decided that he should abstain from celebrating mass, but that, after performing the penance enjoined, he might minister in all other offices.† Pope Innocent writes to the Bishop of Nevers in these terms:—"There has come into our presence a priest of Naizin, of the Cistercian order, saying that while he was in a secular habit, some servants asked him anxiously where was a certain man whom they were seeking; and he, not knowing for what purpose they sought him, told them the place, to which they instantly hastened, but found him not; though afterwards they found him elsewhere, and put him to death. He being wounded in conscience, went and disclosed what he had done to the Archbishop of Bourges, who prohibited him from saying mass for a time. And now, having entered the Cistercian order, he asks mercy from us. Therefore, since he is to be commended for asking advice from us, 'quia bonarum mentium est ibi culpam agnoscere ubi culpa non est,' we write

to your fraternity, desiring that you will inquire respecting this affair, and if it be so as he represents, that you grant him power to celebrate."*

Of this delicacy of conscience we find repeated mention even in profane histories. Conrad von Schwarzenberg, a crusader in 1203, is thus described:—"So great was his integrity, that whenever he recollected having uttered what was not true, in jest or through accident, he used to ask pardon in secret."†

But we need not proceed with such evidence. It is surely only a just conclusion that, when acts or omissions of this nature could so disturb the conscience—when the offense they gave it was so great that men were induced to practise to the very letter the precept of Christ, and cut off a limb, the moral sense must have been keenly susceptible—the horror excited by conviction of sin profound, and the desire of innocence truly fervent and sincere. Moreover purity of heart was not regarded in the middle ages as a privilege reserved only for a few, but it was known to belong essentially to every individual amongst that perfect people whom the Precursor came to prepare, as the Church observes in her anthem for the eve of St. John.

According to the remark of a great German writer, who has studied the middle ages with all the characteristic learning and penetration of his countrymen, "the whole redemption of man and his real deliverance through Christ was known to be, not an external and mechanical operation, or a change from inveterate evil, as if by a magical word; but the real justification was the real sanctification—the divine act was to be united with the human act, whereby the man was to be internally changed, so as to be converted to a new life. Therefore," said they, "it is necessary to know God according to truth, and to live in him, which is to live in truth. And as it was necessary, as descendants of Adam, to have a scientific knowledge of sin and of its consequences, in order to feel the need of a Redeemer in all its force, so was it necessary to have a scientific knowledge of Christ, as without a true living union with Christ, man could not enter upon the spiritual life, there being no Christian life without Christian truth."‡

* Epist. Lib. ii. 227.

† Gunther, c. xi. ap. Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. I.

‡ Staudenmaier, Johan Scotus Erigena und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit. i. 322.

* Dunham, Hist. Ger. Emp. 11.

† Epist. Lib. ii. 194.

Sanctity, the most clear serenity of mind, was, in fact, the soul of all Catholic manners ; it was the criterion by which all acts and operations were to be estimated ; for, without purity of heart, it was known that nothing would avail to lead man to his true end. Consequently, the daily prayer of every Catholic was that of the priest in the first words of the holy mass, that God would judge him and distinguish his cause from the race that is not holy ; and if the being associated with that race, in the eyes of God, were deemed synonymous with final destruction, we may be sure that a similitude with it in the eyes of man was not regarded as a happy presage. This was a practical truth of which no age of Christian society was left in ignorance. In the degenerate days of the old pagan civilization we find it presented by St. Clement of Alexandria to the Christian converts, in curious contradistinction to the desires of prevailing vanity : " We that are in Christ Jesus," he says, " must indeed put off the old man, not the grey-headed, but that which is corrupted through the deceitfulness of desire ; and we must be renewed, not by means of dyes and ointments, but in the spirit of our mind."* To the fathers of the desert the same instruction is presented by the great St. Anthony : " O my dear children in Jesus Christ!" cries the blessed father, " may you comprehend how much my love for you exceeds the affections of the flesh ! It is he who makes me prostrate myself without ceasing at the feet of the holy altars, in order to obtain from my God that you may know him, and that you may perceive all the price of the grace which he has given to you, and that you may be aware of your danger, and that you may be enabled to offer yourselves to God as victims adorned with that purity without which no one can see God. My dear children, my soul is covered with confusion when I consider that we have the faculty of doing what the saints have done, and that we do not wish to elevate our minds, to seek the glory of heaven, nor to imitate the works of the saints, nor to walk in their footsteps, in order to be partakers with them of that eternal inheritance which is reserved for us by that God who is our common father, and to whom be glory and honour for ever and ever ! Amen."†

We find the blessed abbot Esaia enforce-

ing the necessity of conversion to purity of heart in these terms :—" As the iron left in the fire becomes like it, so that no one can touch it since it is fire, in like manner the soul, while it treats and speaks with God, becomes fire and burns his enemies. Let the soul, therefore, be renewed as iron ; let it be rendered holy, so that it may never again be corrupted by anything of this world ; but let it rest in its right nature, which it hath from God. For it is impossible that the soul should ever enter into the rest of the children of God, unless it should first bear his image ; and the mark of his image is charity."*

Proceeding now to inquire into the method which was prescribed for attaining to the grace of this beatitude, we find the same unanimity, the same simplicity of instruction, through the long tract of ages that have heard the Church ; and so efficacious were the means afforded by her for this end, that in addressing the philosophers of Florence, Savonarola drew an argument from their admirable success, appealing to experience for what he advanced to prove the truth and divinity of the Catholic religion.†

Let us refer to the *Speculum Morale* that is added to the three Mirrors of Vincent of Beauvais, as it embraces all that had been taught by previous guides : " Purity of heart," saith this text, " no one can acquire by himself, or possess of himself ; but God alone, who can create, can cleanse souls ; and therefore Job asks, ' Quis potest facere mundum de immundo conceptum semine : nonne tu qui solus es ? ' For though the soul created by God is clean of itself, yet in the hour of its creation and infusion it is spotted, and, as it were, affected with leprosy, by the contact with the infected seed : therefore, the heart that desireth to be clean must repeat the words of the leper to Jesus Christ—Domine, si vis, potes me mundare : who will immediately answer, Volo mundare."‡ The soul is cleansed by the washing of baptism ; but as this cannot be repeated, the boundless mercy of God hath instituted a new mode of purification, which is by penance, comprising the three parts of contrition, confession, and satisfaction ; the last of which includes fasting, prayer, and alms : fasting, to which the apostle alludes—*Mortificate membra vestra* ; prayer, of which we read, in allusion to the woman's purification, *Orabit pro ea sacerdos et sic*

* S. Clem. Alex. *Pædagogus*, Lib. iii. c. 3.

† S. Anthony Abb. *Epist.* V.

* B. Esaie Abbat. *Orat.* 25. *Bib. Pat.* XII.

† *Triumph. Crucis*, Lib. ii. 3.

‡ Lib. i. pars IV. dist. 21.

mundabitur; and if by another's prayer any one be cleansed, much more by his own; for in prayer the heart of man, directed and elevated to God, is cleansed; and alms, of which we read, *Date elemosynam et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis*. "To preserve this purity," it continues, "many things should move us: first, the consideration of the price of our cleansing, which is the blood of Christ; secondly, the difficulty, nay, the impossibility of obtaining it by ourselves, since neither by ourselves nor for ourselves can we recover it, but God alone can render it to us; thirdly, a regard to our own soundness should move us, for in cleansing our heart we receive health; fourthly, a love of fear should move us, because the conscience can have no peace while it is defiled; but sins disturb peace: *non est pax impiis dicit Dominus*: as the master of a family is not at peace while he knows that robbers or mortal enemies are in his house; fifthly, because in recovering cleanness of heart we recover divine love, for God can love no one unless the pure, as he is the lover of all purity."*

Again, we find passages of this kind occurring, which show with what attention and diligence the men of those ages studied to make clean their hearts. "Besides the evils of this life common to the good and evil, the just," says Vincent of Beauvais, "have certain peculiar labours of their own, with which they struggle against vices; for they labour lest a probable opinion should deceive them, lest a cunning word should mislead them, lest fear should prevent them from doing what they ought, lest cupidity should impel them to do what they ought not, lest the sun should set upon their anger, lest an indecorous or immoderate sadness should absorb them, lest ingratitude should render them slow to repay, lest a good conscience should be fatigued by malicious reports, lest rash suspicions should mislead them, lest a calumny against themselves should discourage them, lest sin should reign in their mortal bodies, lest the eye should follow concupiscence, lest in thought or view they should dwell in what ill delights, lest a wicked or indecorous word should be heard willingly, lest in their war of labours and perils they should hope for victory from their own strength, or, having obtained it, should ascribe it to themselves, and not to divine grace."†

All these teachers set out with express-

* Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Morale, Lib. i. s. iv. dist. 21.

† Vinc. Bellov. Specul. Doctrinale, Lib. i. c. 5.

ing their profound sense of the heinousness and predominance of sin; and after having mourned in common "the servitude in which the half of human kind are mewed, victims of lust and hate, the slave of slaves, food to the hyæna lust, who among graves, over his loathed meal laughing in agony raves," Richard of St. Victor represents it thus:—"One thing the love of riches commands, and another the love of delights; one thing the heat of pleasure, another the search of cupidity. But when, in this manner, different vices hurry man away in different directions, or impel him to contrary things, they afflict him miserably, and suffer him not to rest day or night; and in a wondrous and pitiable manner they forestal the time of his damnation, whilst they rage with internal anxiety of mind or exterior affliction against one another; and unless supernal clemency should look upon them, by temporal they pass to eternal torments."* "Jesus, seeing the city wept over it; and what the Lord, according to history, did once, the church," says Hugo of St. Victor, "does daily by his elect: it weeps over the reprobate, who know not why they are to be pitied, because they rejoice in the worst things, who, if they had foreseen their damnation, would have wept over themselves with the tears of the elect."†

Hear Alanus de Insulis:—"If such be the felicity of a pure conscience, what is the misery of a seared mind! This is a book written with the hand of the devil, and defiled with hideous characters. The mind conscious of evil is there a chart displaying the enormity of sin; there, O miserable man! thou mayest behold whatever thou hast written from thy earliest years, by which thou hast offended God, injured thy neighbour, undone thyself. O damned book! in which are written not verses and hymns, but lamentations and woe. But now, O man! efface by confession what thou hast written there by false speech; efface by contrition what thou hast written by evil thoughts; efface by satisfaction what thou hast written by wicked deeds; efface the book of perverse conscience, lest reason should read therein that which might condemn thee, lest the devil should find therein that of which he might accuse thee, lest God should see therein that for which he might judge thee, that so thou mayest return to the spiritual joy

* De Eruditione Hominis Inter. i. Lib. i. 33.

† Hugo S. Vict. Allegor. in Lucam, Lib. iv. c. 30.

of the mind, return to thyself, return to God.*

St. Bernard speaks of the same operation in this manner:—"Jesus entered into a certain castle, saith the Gospel; and what our Lord and Saviour vouchsafed to perform once, and in one place visibly, he still daily accomplishes in an invisible manner in the hearts of the elect. For what is this castle but the human heart, which, before our Lord comes to it, is surrounded with the ditch of cupidity, and encompassed with the wall of obstinacy, and raised up within like a Babylonian tower? It has sensual pleasure and vanity for its provisions, by which it is nourished; hardness of heart for its defence, and the arguments of carnal wisdom for its arms. But Christ entering this castle, it is overthrown, and in its place a new and beautiful edifice is raised; for cupidity being removed desire and the love of heaven, like a vast sea surround it; continence and patience form its walls of defence; the structure rises upon the foundation of faith, and increases by love unto the charity of God which is its keep or highest tower. Old things are passed away, behold all things are made new. Thus solid are its walls, so that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor virtues, neither strength, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can prevail against it. The provisions of this blessed place are spiritual, the fulfilling of the divine will; the arms are those which the apostle describes, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit. And now we knock at its gates, the gates of justice, that they may open to us, and that, entering, we may behold within the great works of the Lord, exquisite in all his counsels. For there he has built as if on mount Sion, that evangelical tower, through which the saints, with a humble heart, ascend to heaven, not by their own virtue, but by the assistance and grace of God. They proceed from virtue to virtue, until they see the God of gods in Sion, for this is the reward, and here is the end and fruit of our labour, namely, the vision of God. In Israel his name is great, and his dwelling in Sion. No more combats await us now. There break he the arrows and the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle."†

St. Bonaventura describes this change of the right hand of the Most High in terms

* Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 14.

† S. Bern. in Assumpt. B. M. Serm. V.

no less impressive. "First therefore," he says, "the understanding being purified by the laver of contrition, and inflamed and elevated by the fire of charity, with chaste meditations and devout thoughts it is to be shown how that blessed Son of God Christ Jesus is by a devout mind spiritually conceived. When a devout soul, either by hope of celestial reward, or by fear of eternal punishment, or by weariness of remaining longer in this valley of tears, being moved and stimulated by new inspirations, is visited, inflamed by holy affections, and agitated by celestial meditations, and at length casting away and despising its former defects and ancient desires, by a new prospect of living, is spiritually fulfilled by the Spirit of grace from the Father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift,—what else takes place, but that a virtue from on high descending, and there ensuing an overshadowing of heavenly refreshment, the celestial Father mitigates carnal concupiscence, comforts and assists the mental eyes to behold, and so, as it were, impregnates the soul, and makes it fruitful. After this most holy mystery, the countenance grows pale by true humility and conversation; through contempt for worldly things the mind becomes indifferent to food and drink, and even sometimes begins to sicken in the casting off its own will. Now by degrees every thing external, and that is perceived externally, begins to be tedious and heavy, because it is perceived and heard internally. O happy conception, followed by such a contempt for the world and such a desire of heavenly operations. Now the soul begins to fly from the society of those who are wise with worldly wisdom, and seeks familiarity with those who long for what is heavenly. Now the soul begins with Mary to serve Elizabeth, that is, those whom the divine grace inflames with love. And this is observed by many; for of necessity the more they abstract themselves from the world, the more they render themselves familiar and friendly to the good; and in proportion as they feel an aversion to the society of the wicked, they feel a delight in the conversation of the good and spiritual. Because, according to the blessed Gregory, he who adheres to a holy man, from the custom of beholding and hearing him, is excited to the love of truth, to fly the darkness of sin, and to burn with the desire of divine light."•

• S. Bonavent. de quinque Festivitatibus Pucri Jesu. 1.

Hugo of St. Victor also, in many places, treats on the purification of the heart with all the characteristic beauty of his style. "The spirit of the devil," saith he, "worked the joy of iniquity, and the spirit of the world the joy of vanity, both evil; the one guilty, the other the occasion of guilt. Then came the Spirit of God, when the evil spirits were cast forth, and entered into the tabernacle of the heart, and worked its own joy—the joy of truth against the joy of sin—the joy of felicity against the joy of vanity: and the good joys expelled the evil joys; and when these had begun to fill the heart, man, for the first time, discerned that the former were not true, since they were neither sufficient nor durable.*"

But it is Guibert de Nogent, applying to the process of mental renovation the terms of the book of Genesis respecting the creation of the world, whose eloquence and depth of thought, and minuteness of observation on this theme seem most remarkable; and the passage is so interesting a specimen of the wisdom of the eleventh century, that I think no one can tire listening to it. "In the beginning," then, he proceeds, "God created the heaven and the earth. In the beginning of our conversion there are within ourselves two things contrary to each other—flesh and spirit, which once indeed, before we obeyed the serpent, were at concord, but which ever since the fall have been at variance. Therefore, when the chaos of vices was to be at an end, and a conversion to be wrought in the soul of man, God created the heaven and the earth, that is, he enabled the spirit to rise superior to the fleshly nature, and to maintain a sovereignty. We have, therefore, a heaven within us, by which we breathe after celestial things; and we have, on the other hand, an earth, by which we seek the things that are common to us and brutes; and, on our conversion, this heaven and this earth are first created, when the sense of these two becomes ordered according to justice in the mind. But the earth was without form and void: the carnal affections may truly be said to be void, because they have nothing in them solid, stable, or constant; and that they are without form, is seen in the state of the interior man, when its thoughts and cares are far from God, meditating only useless or malicious things; for what is man, I do not say without reason, but without God who enlightens

that reason, unless a brute? For reason, if it be not joined with divine love, is rather a secular and diabolic cunning, than a prudence available to any good; for nature by itself is never good, though inasmuch as it is from God nature is always good; so that the devil, according to this, is good, though of himself most evil. Therefore the earth of itself is void, thinking nothing, producing nothing useful. Our authors say, that in the old translation was read, *not inanis et vacua*, but *invisibilis et incomposita*, which agrees better with morality; for the mind of man in the depth of sin, involved in a reprobate sense by the custom of sinning, is unable even to behold its own deformity; for such is a reprobate sense, that it blinds the mind of those who perish; so that they think it is they alone who are happy and worthy of honour from other men on account of their prosperity. Therefore, before God divided the heaven from the earth, the earth was invisible; for before he gave the grace of discretion, the mind could not see how sordid and execrable was the carnal affection; as when a live man and a dead man are placed together, the living can see the dead, but the dead in no wise can behold the living; so man, whose soul is living to God, can see how detestable are vices; but he who hath reached the bottom of evils, and hath despised and despaired, cannot perceive what is virtue, what is modesty, or any other grace. To them, therefore, the earth is invisible and incomposed: and darkness was on the face of the abyss. We may say, that the abyss is the human mind, the incomprehensible depth of which every man knows who hath experienced the inscrutable profundity, the instability and perturbation of his own heart; for even in the hearts of the good, when the flesh rises against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, the mind is in such a density of cogitation, that it can scarcely tell in what state it is, whether it will follow the impetus of the flesh, or that of the spirit. Whoever desires to know this more fully, should read the tract of St. Augustin, upon that verse, *Abyssus abyssum invocat*. Now in the hearts of the wicked, what do you think is the gulf, what the immensity of darkness, if such be the obscurity in the minds of the elect? If over the gourd of the people of God there spring up the thorns of secular cares and the weeds of carnal desire, how much more over the house of the joy of the exulting city? From this

* Hugo S. Vict. *Miscellan. Lib. i. tit. 103. c. 14.*

darkness there have arisen, therefore, invisibility and decomposition. And the Spirit of God moved upon the water; over the flood of many waters; that is, over the flood of many carnal desires the Spirit of God is borne. The wretched mind considers what misery it suffers; and as we read of the king of Babylon who killed his sons before the king of Juda, so while man considers how his good works are slain by the devil and destroyed, with what groans he beholds this cannot be described; because he had rather die than behold this, and yet against the concupiscence and customs of vice, in his interior marrow, he is not able in any manner to resist. But God, who turns the impious, and they are no longer impious, who calls the dead forth from their sepulchre, that they may live before him in justice, beholds the affliction of his people, and descends, that is, he has compassion on their misery, and he says to them, *Fiat lux, et facta est lux*. What is this light, unless that first good which is given to those who are converted in the heart? and what is this first good but the fear of God, which is called the beginning of wisdom? for wisdom is called light in many places of Scripture. This fear is a light which dispels the darkness of obscure cogitation, and lights up the heart to the love of all virtue. Light being made, we read, And God saw that it was good; not that admiration could be in the Most High, by whom every thing admirable is created, but that he wished to show his creatures what they should admire. Therefore he made man see the light that it was good, made him see how good it was to emancipate the mind by the fear and love of God. And he divided the light from the darkness; that is, he gave a power of distinguishing between vice and virtue, which with a wondrous art, divine piety insinuates into us; for in the beginning of our conversion God grants us a flood of tears, and a constancy in prayer, so that we seem to pass beyond the limits of human nature, and to become angelic by dint of contemplation. And when he acts thus with us for some time, we begin to presume, and then God resists our pride, and leads us, who had wandered in solitude, that is, without God, irrationally and bestially, to the way of seeking the city of which he is the builder. So he withdraws again the sweetness of his grace, and permits us to hunger and thirst with an intense hunger and thirst, and to languish in evils, that he

may convince us that, without him, we can do nothing: then our soul disdains all food of sacred reading, from which we might draw compunction, and so abominates it, that we seem to approach the gates of death, that is, the vices which lead to death; but he who tempts us, not that he should destroy, nor that he should know, but that he should make us know if we love him, sends his word into us, and heals and rescues us from destruction. Thus he makes us know that all good is from him, and that we have all evil from ourselves, and thus doth he divide the light from the darkness. And he called the light day, and the darkness night. He makes day in the soul of man by illuminating his reason; and, on the contrary, those who voluntarily sin he delivers up to the night of a reprobate sense; he calls this darkness night, inasmuch as he permits it to cover them; and the evening and the morning are one day; that is, because to those who love God, all things conspire to good, the evening, which is adversity, and the morning, which is prosperity, are one day, because the saints, whether in evils or in honours, are always the same, and there remains always in them the same divine splendour. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. There are twofold waters, there is divine wisdom, and there is secular wisdom, a wisdom from above, and an earthly wisdom, and unless reason be supported by that supernal wisdom, it becomes low cunning, noxious, and perverse; but when joined to the divine prudence, it becomes a firmament, supporting the superior waters by thirsting after them, and depressing the inferior under the dominion of reason. And the evening and the morning were the second day. Our beginnings, according to blessed Gregory, are mixed with evils; and although pious devotion in the morning shines upon us, yet the obscurity of our former, nay, of our natural conversation, soon involves us, and the mind grows dark, lest we should become proud of grace, God ordering it so for our good; but again it is irradiated by the ardour of compunction, lest it should sink into the depths of despair or crime. And thus alternately ascending to heaven, and descending to the abyss, it happens that by this vicissitude, ordained that we should be without vicissitude or even the fear of vicissitude, we come to the chaste life.

And that is the second day. But here a serious question arises, why when on the preceding and following days it is said, and God saw that it was good, it is on this day omitted. For this we should consider what is said of the devil, in Job, *Habitent in tabernaculo ejus, that is, the impious Socii ejus, qui non est.* Who is this that is not, but the devil, who inasmuch as he fell from truth, already ceased to exist; for in what manner does he exist, who exists so unhappily, nay, who is eternally in death, without death? which we may feel also to be our own case, who having fallen in our first parents, have passed from truth to vanity, and should truly have ceased to be, unless we had been restored by the grace of God. Hence, while labouring to taste the wisdom of our Creator, swallowing our spittle, we find ourselves opposed to ourselves; therefore, since the days are evil, and the world is placed in malice, and we must endure this conflict of inferior waters, in which is pride, against the superior, in which are humility and sanctity, as long as we are in this valley of tears, this lake of misery, that is, the present life, in the prophetic and apostolic language, this is not a life and a country, but a state of banishment and death. The apostle cries, *Miser ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?* and shall we think good these tortures which we bear, this battle of flesh against spirit, and of spirit against flesh? And even if we do any good, still, since we are always in the flood and danger of sin, as that dove of Noah, because we have no rest here. We must fly to Noah, that is, to Christ, who can alone give rest to our souls. Therefore, we see how rightly this second day is not called good; because after the first day spent in paradise, we have been involved in these sorrows, which are so aptly signified in the ritual, which prescribes the tract to be sung after the Alleluja on holy Saturday, to teach us that we have incurred the labour of this life after the joy of Paradise. And God said, *Let the waters be gathered together, which are under the heaven, into one place, and let the dry land appear.* The waters which are under heaven are secular acts, which are concerned with forensic affairs, and with deceit, and are now to be subjected under the yoke of our intelligence. These are gathered into one place; for to God, who is our place, in whom we live and move, our solitudes, which before flowed wandering and unstable, are now com-

pelled to minister. All our secular prudence is now employed in God's service; our genius is no longer exercised in deceiving the poor, but the gold and silver which have been brought from Egypt are spent in erecting a tabernacle of God in solitude, that is, in cultivating a devout mind far from the crowd of vices. And the dry land appeared; for the conscience, which was before fluid, like the earth of our heart, is now dried up from the flood of superfluous cogitations, and appears apt for bearing fruit. Let the earth then, he says, bring forth the green herb, bearing seed. The heart of man emits now the first fruits of the seed of the word of God, which is the green herb; because, while every thing human is sterile, that lives ever fresh in the desires of eternal hope. The works, therefore, which are signified by the fruits and flowers follow, and the evening and the morning are the third day. What is this third day but science, which is the third step, after fear and piety, tending to wisdom? God also said, *Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day and night.* These two lights may be interpreted Christ and the church; Christ is proposed to the imitation of the strong, but the church, in her weaker members, has examples for the younger and less powerful: he gives the greater light to rule the day. We see that some of both sexes prefer the poverty of Christ to possessions, that they may think only of God; and that there are others, who can neither desert the world, nor give themselves wholly to God. Therefore to them he gives lesser lights, the stars to rule the night; for he gives to us, who do not presume to attain the highest things neither Noah, that is rulers; nor Daniel that is, that we should imitate the life of celibacy, but the example of Job, doing good and studying mercy; that we, who cannot hope to come to the golden bed, that is, to the blessed rest by the purple ascent, that is, by martyrdom, may be able at least to attain to it by charity, on account of the daughters of Jerusalem. He, therefore, who does not dare to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, shining from the eternal mountains, may watch the mountains illuminated by it, and endeavour by that light to prove himself a member of the church. And the evening and the morning are the fourth day. And God saw that it was good; for what can be better than that we should attend to what we were and what we are? what more strengthens the mind than the contem-

plation of God and of his elect, learning to despise the prosperous things of this world, and not to fear its adversity? God also said, Let the waters produce creeping things, and fowls upon the earth. What do these signify but the subtle penetration of mind, which insinuates itself into the obscurities of the divine books; and what are the fowls upon the earth, but those who study wisdom, and in the excellence of contemplation, rise far above all earthly things, though still they are under the firmament, that is, below the angelic virtue, for we can never attain to such a flight as theirs, who always behold the face of their Creator. God created also great monsters to move through the waters; and what are these but the illustrious doctors, the capacity of whose genius must awaken such admiration in every breast? What were Augustin, Jerome, Gregory, but monsters in their age, as in our own? Who can simply read the words of the glorious Origen, in 5000 books? Who can worthily comprehend the mysteries of Dionysius the Areopagite? All these stupendous creatures spring out of the waters; because, from the preaching of the sacred Scriptures, they conceive the effect of thinking well, and the power of acting well. And God blessed them, and said, increase and multiply; as if God, observing our intellectual labours, had said to us, increase in intelligence, and imbue one another in the science of sacred things. Investigate the depth of the waters, insinuate into the hollow and profound places beneath, and let the wing of speculation bear you aloft eagle like, over the earth. And the evening and the morning are the fifth day, which answers to the gift of counsel which is required for discussing the mysteries of the sacred page. Finally, man is created, and then we read, that God saw all the things that he had made, and behold they were very good; that is, he made us see that they were good; for when we attain to the height of virtue, the love of God passes so into our very nature, that even if we might sin with impunity, the mind would never be bent from the tenor of its way. We see, therefore, and understand, what good things God hath done for us; and this brings us to the end of the sixth day. And God finished on the seventh day his work, and rested on it, which signifies, that not in this life, but in the next, the labours of the just can terminate; for as long as we are in this world, we neither can, nor ought to have, rest from doing good; but in the seventh

age of the world we shall be released; for then will be the perfection of beatitude, and for those who rested from evil the Sabbath of eternal rest. In this life, therefore, it is the time for combatting and agony; there remains for us the everlasting crown."

So far Guibert de Nogent.

The supernatural purification and conversion of the heart to God may be said to be the great leading phenomenon of a moral nature, presented in the history of the middle ages. It is not an exaggeration to affirm, that these sublime views of its regeneration, so clearly derived from experience, had the effect of transforming society into a new body, furnished with new organs, and breathing a new spirit, since the whole frame of nations was reorganised, to correspond with this new love of the human heart. If we desire to know their more specific counsels, we shall find every where passages that evince how great was the spiritual wisdom, and how profound the knowledge of the human heart, which belonged to men in ages of faith.

"Let the heart which desireth to see God, study to be clean," says Richard of St. Victor, "that it may rise to the contemplation of divine things. O what earnestness, O what diligence, is necessary in that arduous study, before the mind can perfectly wipe off the ashes of earthly love, and consume them by the flame of true love; before it can refine the gold of its intelligence to that degree of purity, which is accordant with the dignity of such a work."*

"O," cries St. Theresa, "what subject for fear in this life, and what different kinds of ardour meet here? some consume the soul, and reduce it to ashes, and others purify it, and give it power to live and to possess God for eternity. O my God, grant that I may not depart from this life until I shall have placed all my desire in thee; until it will be impossible for me to love any thing else but thee alone. Grant, O my God, that this word love may never pass my lips excepting when pronounced for thee, since, thou alone excepted, every thing falls, every thing perishes, and all is nothing."

"In the love of perfect good," says a monk, who wrote in the time of St. Bernard, "is perfect happiness; the measure of our happiness will, therefore, be that

* Richard. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. i. Lib. iv. cap. 6.

of our love, since it is impossible to love God without being truly good, and to be good without being perfectly happy. Love, says the sage in the divine Canticles, 'is strong as death.' He said truly: for in the same manner as death forcibly seizes upon the soul to separate it from the body; so does the love of God, with an invisible force, withdraw man from the world, and extinguish in him all attachment to perishable things. The force of love is as great as that of death; and the victory which it obtains over vice is no less sensible to all the faculties of the soul, than is the hand of death to the body when it seizes upon all its parts."

"Our heart," says another spiritual guide, "is transformed into what it loves. I am in a manner all divine if I love God, and I become earth if I love the earth."

What, think you, was the purity of blessed Francis on that mountain of Alvernia, when he saw the seraph, and received the stigmas of Christ? But of this hereafter.

"In the first degree," saith Richard of St. Victor, "love is insuperable, in the second it is inseparable, in the third singular, in the fourth insatiable: insuperable, yielding to no other affection; inseparable, never departing from the memory; singular admitting of no ally; insatiable when nothing can satisfy it. Mark then here the excellence of love, which exceeds all other affections, the vehemence of love, which suffers not the mind to rest, its violence, which expels all other affections, its supereminence, to which nothing can suffice. These four degrees of love are distinguished either as engaged on divine or on human objects, and in divine affections the greater they are the better they are. O how precious that insuperable love of God, that inseparable, singular, and insatiable love of God."*

Other axioms we find laid down to guide men to the true felicity. "The least imperfection," says blessed John of the Cross, "prevents the soul from ascending. As it matters not whether the thread which is attached to a bird be slight or strong, since either hinders it from flying away; so an imperfection, whether little or great, keeps down the soul. When a vessel is full of fluid, the least fissure is sufficient to occasion the gradual loss of every drop: and in like manner, when the soul is filled with the precious liquor of virtue and grace,

* Richard. S. Victor, *Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentiæ charitatis.*

if the opening caused by the slightest imperfection be not effectually stopped, this liquor escapes by little and little to the last drop."*

"Lava a malitia cor tuum Hierusalem, ut salva fiat."† "The innocent in work," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "ascend the mountain of the Lord; which signifies purity of mind, and contemplation of celestial things."‡ "There is no middle state for the heart to rest in," say these high teachers; "necesse est enim animam ad carnalia et terrena dejici, quæ à spirituali vita degenerans ad cœlestia non aspirat."§ "Therefore," says Gerson, "without the exercise of meditation, no one, excepting in the event of an especial miracle of God, can attain to the right observance of a Christian life." St. Bernard remarks that, "nothing is felt so sweet in this life, nothing separates the mind so much from the love of the world, nothing strengthens the soul so effectually against temptations, nothing exalts a man so much, and assists him so effectually to every good work, as the grace of contemplation."|| And Louis of Blois says, "That all masters of the spiritual life teach, that the most useful of all exercises, and the sole necessary, is that of the remembrance of the humanity of Jesus Christ, and principally of his sacred passion."¶ Above all, they insist on the necessity of continual vigilance, remarking with St. Ambrose, that "the ordinary fraud of Satan is to endeavour to cast men down from their eminence, as he tempted our Lord to throw himself from the pinnacle of the temple: he tries," saith he, "to precipitate them from their holy and venerable deeds to earthly and defiled, that he who stands in purity of mind on the summit of the temple, may cast himself down into the deep abyss and contagion of sin."**

The admonitions of Richard of St. Victor on this head evince subtle observation of intellectual operations, and show with what care every insinuating evil was repelled. "Frequently," he says, "when disturbed by evil thoughts, a man fancies that this arises not from his negligence, but in order to preserve him from pride; and thus he supposes it humility to be less watchful against lust, and he knows not how detestable is the pride which in

* The Ascent of Mount Carmel, Liv. i.

† Jer. 4. ‡ S. Bernardin. Sen. Sermo X.

§ Petri Blesensis, Epist. cxi.

|| S. Bernardi de interiori Domo, cap. vii.

¶ Lud. Blos. Guide Spirit. cap. iv.

** S. Amb. Serm. XXVI.

such defilement suggests that he is not a sinner, but another Paul, to whom the angel of Satan gives a thorn in the flesh, lest the multitude of virtues, or the greatness of revelations, should exalt him. Thus, in a piteous and wondrous manner, he grows proud, without ceasing to be luxurious, and he gives himself to luxury without ceasing to be proud. Who do you think can break such cedars? Truly he who breaketh the cedars of Libanus. This is the change of the right hand of the Most High, to bow down the swelling heart to the image of the humility of Christ."*

Faith, as St. Augustin said, directed the intention, but power to vanquish diabolic obstacles would have failed without the intervention of celestial aid; therefore, the universal belief of these ages was that of the Angelic Doctor, that "man in the state of this life is constituted as if on a journey to his country, on which he is beset with many perils, and therefore that as to men on dangerous roads guards are given, so to every man, as long as he is a wayfarer, the protection of an angel is granted, until he arrives at the end of this journey, when

he will no longer have an angel guardian, but will either have in heaven an angel reigning along with him, or in hell a demon punishing him."*

This belief was not without an influence on the general manners of men, and especially in regard to their mutual intercourse. It would appear from the ancient writings, that wherever those who were nourished with thoughts of piety met a man, they considered that they rather met his angel; and unto whatever assembly of persons they came, there they acted under the impression that it was an assembly of angels.† Indeed, one of the most remarkable features in the intellectual character of the middle ages, was the propensity to look always at the unearthly, the beautiful, the engaging, the innocent side of things. This breaks out most strikingly in their pictures, in their books, in their ceremonies, and in their social customs. What pure and amiable creatures are the young of human kind in all their representations? youth's nature sanctified, is most lovely in their eyes; it is a beauty coveted of angels, an image stamped by the everlasting pleasure, to enhance the joy of heaven.

CHAPTER II.



HE extent to which purity of heart was cultivated during ages of faith, may be considered in relation to many subjects, and ascertained from many sources of information connected with history. It may be traced by observing its influence on the affections of men, on the manners of society, on literature and art, and on philosophy: in all which relations it led to such results that Savonarola, addressing the Italian philosophers of his time, appeals to their observation of the manifest effects daily appearing in the Catholic church to justify his concluding, from them, that, the religion must be divine.†

A consideration of its influence on the affections alone would open a boundless field for psychological or moral researches. It would afford an opportunity for pene-

trating deeper into the mysterious side of the ancient life than we have hitherto done, and for noticing some of the most interesting phenomena presented in the history of mankind. But the whole subject is of such extent that we can only throw a very rapid glance at each branch. The reader, who is already familiarised with many characteristic features of the ancient Catholic civilization, will not be surprised when I cite among the first and most prominent of the facts connected with the desire of this sixth beatitude, the doctrinal and practical love of God, which in those ages, formed a distinct element in the constitution of society, produced as great an effect upon the external aspect of the world, and gave rise to as many novelties and modifications in the whole order of human life, as result at present from the love of personal distinction under the mask of politi-

* Richardi S. Victoris Annot. in Psalm. xxviii.
† Triumph. Crucis, Lib. ii. c. 13.

* St. Thom. Sum. 1. p. Q. cxiii. art. 4.
† Niremberg, Doct. Ascet. Lib. iv. p. iv. cap. 34.

cal and social forms, or from any other of the great leading principles to which the thoughts and actions of men are made subordinate.

Among the teachers who, in these subsequent times, have come forward intending to transmit or impart a knowledge of the principles of moral and theological truth, there is no want, it is true, of unity and conformity as far as regards the general expression of their obligation to fulfil the first and greatest of the commandments of the new law; but when they have done this and laid down the abstract principle, they may be said to stop as if the subject demanded no further investigation, or admitted of no ulterior development. But it was not so in the middle ages, when the most important offices of human life, the institutions which presented themselves at every side, the whole frame and order of society, the half of literature, and all philosophy may truly be said to have turned on this hinge, and to have been identified with the doctrine and practice of the love of God, so that when it prevailed they flourished, and when it declined they fell to ruin and past away.

"The thoughts and affections of men," says the ascetic, "are various and unstable, but all are vain and impure which are not of God. O human heart, cupidinous, anxious, and insatiable, how evil and bitter it is for thee to forsake thy God!"* "Ut miser est homo qui amat!" exclaims the slave in Plautus, regarding the condition of his master's mind: but the poets of later and happier ages knew to say rather how wretched is the man who loves not as he ought. Purity of heart changed every thing. Let us hear the blessed John of the Cross describing this renovation. "Those who begin to love God may be compared to new wine, and those who have long loved him to old. As new wine ought to effervesce in the barrel, in order that it may discharge its froth and impurity, in like manner those who begin to love God ought, in their first fervour, to purify themselves from their vices and natural imperfections; and as this wine is neither pure, nor agreeable to the taste, nor conducive to health, in like manner these persons are not confirmed in the service of God, nor of a pure and refined taste in things spiritual, nor representatives of holiness, because they are full of natural sentiments, sensual tastes, indiscretions,

forgetfulness, inconstancy, and useless researches, and other defects which they ought to discharge as new wine casts up the lees. On the contrary those who have had long exercise in the love of God are like old wine, which is pure, wholesome, substantial, of good taste, without mixture of lees, without effervescence, without tendency to escape or to burst the bottle. Thus these ancient servants of God are purified from sensible fervour, from the transports of an ill regulated devotion, from too violent ardour, and other spiritual imperfections; but they are constant, faithful, masters of their senses, of their passions, of their desires, and of their actions."

The soul says of herself in the Canticle, "I have lost the flock that I formerly followed." "The flock that the soul followed," he observes; and which it took care to feed before it had arrived at this eminent perfection, is nothing else but its natural and spiritual defects: the spirit was curious and flew after new acquisitions: its will sought after spiritual delights and attached itself to little trifles, to self-esteem, to the point of honour, to a hundred other things which flatter nature, which have the air of the world, and which content the senses and the passions. The heart wished to taste in spiritual exercises, those interior consolations which are only good to hinder the imperfect from rising to perfection and to the divine union. The memory itself was embarrassed with a thousand useless things, which filled it with inquietude and difficulties, while it was endeavouring to retain them all and to propose them to the soul for its service. But after all they only hindered it from effecting a union with its Creator. That is the reason why she disengages herself from them by the force of love, and says with joy, "I have lost the flock that I formerly followed." "All her exercise is in loving." "Love alone governs her; she does and suffers all things by love: her contemplations and her commerce with God; all her spiritual exercises and all her corporal works, all that is comprised in the functions of body and of soul, have no other principle or end but love. O happy state! O happy life! O happy soul which is arrived at the condition of feeling no more either joy or sadness, bitterness or sweetness, good or evil, excepting for, and by, and in the love of God."

The scholastic philosopher teaches the necessity and method of attaining to this state. "Every rational creature," saith

* Thom. Kemp. Hortulus Rosarum.

St. Anselm, "exists for this end, that, as by reason of discretion it may judge what is more or less good or not good, so, more or less, it may love that or abhor it; for nothing is more proper than that a reasonable creature should be made for this, to love the highest essence above all good as it is the highest good. So that it should love nothing but that or on account of that; because that is good of itself, and nothing else is good unless by that. But it cannot love that unless it study to remember, and to understand it clearly; therefore the rational creature ought to direct all its will and power to recollect and understand and love the chief good.*

Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect. "Many things," saith he, "we love from the choice of deliberation which we do not affect with the appetite of desire. In carnal desires, love from the mind often follows love from the heart; but in spirituals, we always love first from deliberation, and afterwards from affection."† Idiota makes the same remark: "Love springs from the intelligence and falls into the heart by faith. Love enters the mind of men through the ears. Love springs from good discourse and from good observance."‡ Hence the unwearied efforts of the teachers of the middle age to develope all the reasons which should convince the understanding of men that they ought to love God. St. Bonaventura furnishes another example, for he too observes, "that it is always necessary to think previously before one can be moved with love towards God," and cites St. Augustin, saying, "It is necessary at first by reasoning or thinking, intellectually to know before any thing can be loved with affection. Cogitation therefore necessarily precedes the affection of love."§ Then they proceed to observe that the immense goodness of God should impel men to love him. "Think of whatever you will," says St. Bonaventura, "and thence you will have no little motive for loving your Creator."|| "Consider," says Richard of St. Victor, "what is that goodness, to which whatever is pleasing is good because it is pleasing to it, and to which whatever is displeasing is evil because it is displeasing to it."¶ "This master," saith St. Clemens Alexandrinus, "is of all others the most loving, for he

hateth nothing, and wisheth to destroy nothing. He is the cause of every thing existing, and he hateth nothing that exists. If he hateth nothing that he hath made, it remains that he loveth every thing, and above all man, the fairest of his works. Man himself this Father styles *καλλιστον και φιλοθεον ωδον*.* In fact man is a lover of God even when he knows it not. St. Augustin says, "He who loveth his neighbour must in consequence especially love that love itself." On which passage Duns Scotus commenting, adds, "but love is God. It remains to conclude that he loves God."† "Return four kinds of love to God," say the ancient authors, "from thy whole heart for thy corporal being, with all thy soul for thy vital being, with all thy strength for thy sensitive being, with all thy mind for thy angelical and spiritual being, and at last with all together for all together, that is for thyself who art all."

The scholastics caution men from having their affections confined to second causes. Hugo of St. Victor makes the observation that "Fathers transmit not souls to their children. It is God," he says, "who creates each soul separately, by an immediate exercise of his power:" and he cites the words of the Psalm, "*qui finxit sigillatim corda eorum*."‡ Yet they show likewise that the perfect love God, not because he is good to them, but because he is good, as we naturally love whatever is beautiful, without any view to our own utility: which doctrine of the disinterested spirit of piety may be seen, admirably laid down, in the work entitled *Theologia Germanica*.

"God is not loved without reward," says St. Bernard, "although he is loved without regard to the reward."§ "The measure of loving God," he says elsewhere, "is to love him without measure." To this fervent love, every one, who had a wish to profess in sincerity the Catholic religion, continually aspired during ages of faith.

"As long as man is in a state of grace," said Theologians, "he always loves God habitually." But how great was the fervour even of this habitual love in the blessed clean of heart! Richard of St. Victor says it is inconceivable. "Who," he exclaims, "hath strength to conceive that mutual love of the Saviour and the saved! How he loveth them whom he has redeemed with such a precious price, and how they rejoice in him,

* Monologium, cap. 66.

† Rich. S. Victoris de gradibus violentæ Charit.

‡ Idiota Contemplat. c. ii.

§ S. Bonav. Mystica Theologia, ad fin.

|| Stimul. Divin. Amoris, pars ii. cap. 2.

¶ Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplat. l. iv. 17.

* S. Clem. Alex. Pædagog. Lib. i. c. 8.

† Duns. Scot. in Lib. i. Sent. Dist. xvii. Q. 1.

‡ Ps. xxxii. Summe Sentent. tract. III. c. 3.

§ S. Bern. Lib. de dilig. Deo.

and rest in his love, by whom they know that they have been redeemed!"* Stephana Quinzani heard a voice in her heart exclaiming, Love, love, love! and became all seraphic at the sound.† The same mystic call to Ursula Benincasa was not a mere subjective fancy, for it was heard not by herself alone but by others.‡

"O Jesu Christ," cries John de Avilla, "how strong is thy love, and how it converts all things to good! He that is nourished with the noble love of our Saviour will never feel hunger nor poverty, and will put all things temporal under his feet, for, possessing God by love, he will want nothing." §

How a retrospective glance at the historical facts, contained in the former volumes, would verify the truth of such observations; for from what other principle sprung all those varied fruits of heroism, justice, and sanctity, which have been witnessed but the love of Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep his great command? If the true marks of love for God be, as St. Theresa says, "the prayers which are offered up with ardour for what regards the glory of his Son and the augmentation of the Catholic faith," we need only refer to the fifth book for abundant and glorious illustration. Love itself being thus the object of preference habitual or actual, it followed that all the affections and springs of human action were, more or less, directed toward this common centre, for it was clearly not alone the schoolmen and mystic philosophers, but men of every condition, in ages of faith, who might have used the words of St. Hilary which St. Thomas cites as expressing his own conviction, "I am conscious that I owe to God this principal office of my life, that all my speech and all my senses should proclaim him."|| An observation of the effects resulting leads us naturally to the second source of evidence which has been pointed out, consisting in those traits of manners which revealed the existence amongst men of the clean of heart. Here we stand upon a mountain which commands an immense prospect, for all that we have hitherto surveyed, and all that awaits our observation in the subsequent pages of this history can be seen from this point stretched out before us. It is clear that every grace which belonged to the children of beatitude was intimately associated with this element, we must therefore adopt arbitrary limits, and

be content with a rapid glance at some of the most prominent facts which bear testimony to the presence of the pure.

Among these we may notice the influence of the clergy, the influence of the church, and, in general of the theological element in the constitution of society: for in purity of heart and mystic illumination lay the secret of this great moral power. We are told that men, in those ages, were the slaves of priests; but it is strange that those who advance this objection should not observe that it may be turned against themselves; for what does this imply but that they chose to be influenced by those who possessed, in the highest degree, sanctity and wisdom? What philosopher would attempt to found a charge against Alcibiades, upon his own testimony, that he is enslaved by Socrates, saying, *καταδεδουλωμένος τε ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὃς οὐδεὶς ἦν οὐδενὸς ἄλλου*.*

The clean of heart, in ages of faith, were the church's slaves! Well, admitting for a moment such an application of the term, what, let us ask, was the consequence of abolishing this tyranny? Whether increase of purity followed the progress of the self-styled emancipators of the human mind, is a question, reader, that no one possessed of any learning can be at a loss to answer. If any should now pretend to regard the solution as difficult, they may be referred to the testimony of those liberators themselves, who acknowledge that their success had not multiplied the clean of heart. Luther's profound discouragement, towards the end of his career, arose from this observation. "If I had known at first," said he, "that men were so much the enemies of the word of God, I should certainly have remained silent and tranquil. I imagined that they only sinned through ignorance. The world is like a drunken peasant: if you put it in the saddle right on one side, it falls down on the other. There is no helping it, do what one will. The world chooses to belong to Satan. God forbid the world should last fifty years longer! Many sects will arise which are now hidden in the hearts of men. Let the Lord cut matters short with the last judgment, for there is no amelioration to expect. The time is come that was predicted, when men would live without God, each according to his fantasy. Our people, now that they are free from the laws of the pope, wish to be free also from the laws of God." Finally, he took such a disgust for Wittenberg that he could no longer endure to remain there. He wrote from Leipzig

* Rich. S. Vict. in Cantica Cantecorum, c. 10.
+ Ephem. Domin. I. 13.

† Histor. Cleric. Regul. p. ii. ix. Goerres Die Christliche Myst. ii. 150.

§ Epist. xxi. || Con. Gentes, c. 2.

* Plato, Conviv. 35.

to his wife, in 1646, in these terms:—"I wish to arrange affairs so as to have no more need of returning to Wittemberg: my heart has grown cold for that city; I desire to inhabit it no longer. Wittemberg has become a real Sodom, and I will never return to it again; I would rather pass my life on the roads, begging my bread, than torment my poor last days by the view of the scandals of Wittemberg, where all my pains have been in vain."* Such was the result of breaking up the ancient spiritual order of faith, of delivering the Word to the disputation of the curious, and directing the energies of ungovernable men to attack the only authority which could restrain the passions, and subject the affections of the human heart to the sources of purity.

In order next to this great fact of the predominance of religious power, may be noted, that extraordinary solidity and security of the ancient Christian states, which led to such important practical results in favour of intellectual and moral good. Do you seek for the immediate cause of this phenomenon?—You will find it in the multitude of the clean of heart; for, as one who knew them says, "He who hath a clear conscience will be easily contented and kept in peace;" you will find it in the character of their political wisdom, which cannot be more faithfully summed up than in these words of their choice director:—"Study only to please God, and be subject to every human creature for God's sake. Obey superiors, assist inferiors, show reverence to all, and piously endure the manners of the weak and perverse. If you wish to be saved, if you wish to be happy, follow the humility of Christ, and despise yourself; do not wish to be on the tongues of men who deceive their silly lover by vain praises and temporal glory. Look at your own heart, and see to how many passions it is obnoxious, and you will never boast of yourself or despise others, however weak or poor they may be. Let vain glory be far from you, and the desire of human praise on account of some science or art acquired. Perish the false imagination of sanctity! Rejoice with dove-like simplicity, and teach others more by example than by subtle words."†

Lastly, you will find it in the submission of the clean of heart to the authority of God, speaking by the Church; for as the Church sings in her hymn of the Epiphany, alluding to the fears of cruel Herod,—

* Michelet, *Mém. de Luther*, tome iii.

† Thom. à Kempis, *Sermonum* II. pars 7.

"Non eripit mortalia
Qui regna dat cœlestia."

Luther, in his "Sincere Exhortation to all Christians, to warn them from the spirit of Rebellion," in 1524, teaches them that there must be a spiritual but not a temporal insurrection. His philosophic penetration may be judged of by the result which Europe is still beholding, without any prospect of the spectacle being soon at an end. Observe, this solid and secure permanence of states during ages of faith is a fact which cannot be disputed. Luther himself recognised it in bitterness of spirit, when he saw the change around him. "Germany," said he, "has been, and it will never again be what it has been." "Self-security and the invisible force formed the base of the spiritual or religious state," as Novalis observes, "and consequently the civil society which was inseparably connected with it could not but participate in the same advantages."

Now, if you will hear the thoughtful poet of a less happy age, this fact alone, when joined with that of their intellectual activity, would warrant your concluding that these must have been, in a most eminent degree, ages of the clean of heart; for, saith he in solemn verse, alluding to the transitory shadows of government that pass around him,—

"The irreversible decree stands sure,
Where men are selfish, covetous of gain,
Heddy and fierce, unholy and impure,
Their toil is lost, and fruitless all their pain,
They cannot build a work which shall endure."*

The complaint of the slave Xanthias, in Aristophanes, *περὶ ἐμοῦ δ' οὐδεὶς λόγος*—no one talks of me, is then the expression of all servile hearts; and social convulsions, with all their dismal consequences to the people, follow.

The schoolmen saw that such effects were inevitable, if the human race were at any time to adopt for guide reason, without grace—intelligence, without the light of a heart supernaturally cleansed; and philosophers in our age have begun to speak like them. Suppose a vast intelligence, void of morality: "You have," continues one of these, "the genius of evil upon earth. Science, in the hand of this malevolent being, is only an instrument of egotism, and, consequently, of disorder and destruction; for he will make it serve, not to the

* Trench.

glory of God and the happiness of humanity, but to the satisfaction of his own appetites, to the caprices of his imagination; and if such a being were to have duration and power, he would finish by absorbing the whole creation in his devouring personality."

Again, another important fact which indicates the purity of the hearts of men during those ages, was that heroic contempt for personal convenience which we before observed as constituting a characteristic feature of their justice. "By nature," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "man is a lofty animal and proud, and desirous of all good. Nothing is so contrary to the Divine nature as the love of pleasure, which makes men resemble swine."* This contempt of pleasure, which appears in the worst of men when their temporal interest forbids them to indulge in it, was then conspicuous in all ranks of society, whenever it was a question of the soul or of religion. St. Chrysostom even reproached himself with his having taken thought respecting what was necessary for him in the desert, when recollecting the example of those who are the slaves of the world, whom a vile ambition leads to load themselves with great employments, and to take part in the administration of public affairs. "For they," said he, "sacrifice without the least repugnance all the commodities which appear of so great a price to us, in order that they may amass perishable riches. For this end neither labours nor dangers, nor ignominy, nor long voyages, nor a protracted residence in a foreign land, nor any kind of anxiety, nor the rigour of the seasons, nor the chance of failing in their object, nor the fear of sudden death, for an instant occupy their attention.†"

"Why are all those lost who are lost in the world," exclaims St. Theresa, "if it be not on account of their seeking their comfort and their repose?" It was in keeping subordinate to all considerations of a spiritual nature what the genius of modern civilization requires men to study and cultivate with a kind of religious worship, that the clean of heart, in ages of faith, found their satisfaction; they were ever ready to sacrifice what was even most closely associated with spirit, if the interests of a more important intellectual object required it. Witness the words of St. Hilary, advising the Catholics of Milan to abandon their churches and assemble in the woods and caverns, rather than remain when Auxentius the Arian bishop usurped

that see:—"Of one thing I bid you beware—Antichrist. The love of walls ill possesses you; ill do you venerate the church of God in roofs and edifices. Male enim vos parietum amor capit: male ecclesiam Dei in tectis ædificiisque veneramini. Ill do you bear under these the name of peace. Safer to me are the mountains, the woods, lakes, prisons, and deep caverns; for in these the prophets, either remaining or thrown, prophesied with the Spirit of God." Memorable words! How well might they be addressed to many who now cling to chief seats and to cathedrals which their fathers impiously seized, though by such advice there would be little hope of aught exciting but a smile! Yet, had occasion been presented in the middle ages, what multitudes would have obeyed the summons with alacrity! The views of men of pure hearts, who saw God, were not to be confined by walls and edifices, however sublime as works of art, any more than their understandings could have been imposed on by words not identical with faith, however skilfully arranged to sound like it.

Did our limits permit such a delay, we might take a glance here even at the amusements and pleasures of society in ages of faith, and be able to trace the influence of pure hearts, in the very choice which was made of objects to afford them. Assuredly great is the contrast between the beautiful solemnities of a Catholic population, which draw all Genoa to the church of a mountain village, and the ignoble festivals of a city professing to have reformed religion, which hires its theatres for a dinner. But observation of evidence more grave requires us to proceed. The sanctification of all professions and forms of life by the ruling motive, and their direction to a supernatural end, clearly and steadily pursued, without interruption or obscurity arising from any defilement of the heart, is a fact which deserves attention, perhaps more than any other as yet noticed. How many duties were then uppermost in minds which now can think only upon rights! What a mysterious charm was attached to each office, in discharge of which all sinister view was laid aside! Let us consider how many forms of beautiful and innocent life existed in the middle ages under the influence of Catholicism. There was then the castle life, often disordered and turbulent it is true, but as often half sacerdotal, with its evening choir, and all its exquisite provisions, holy and full of honour, for directing well the young affections. By its side was the monastic life, with its solemn

* S. Clem. Alex. *Pædagog.* Lib. iii. c. 7.

† On *Companction*, Lib. i. cap. 6.

purifications and delicious peace, which made St. Bernard say that the crowds which followed it seemed to him more angels than men, and that so constantly was their intention directed according to God's heart, that he firmly believed, without mentioning things of greater merit, that in every step which they made, and in every movement of their hands, they added somewhat to the crown prepared for them in the eternal world.* There was, again, the pilgrim life, with its purifying renouncements, and yet, on the other hand, its sweet and sanctifying recollections of holy men and holy places; there was the knightly life, with its chivalrous allegiance to heaven, its high enjoyment of all the reverential sentiments of our nature, and all its gentle associations of forest glades and crested towers, with the defence of the weak and the noble love of whatever is good and honourable. Nor let us forget the peasant life, with its delicious initiation into all the ineffable consolations and splendours of the saints, having in each rural church and monastery a paradise ever open to it, yielding not alone a peace and felicity, but even a form of external beauty surpassing whatever could be imagined in the palaces of kings,—all were conditions sanctified and pure, yielding a vision of God to men of good will, peace to the heart, truth to the intelligence; so that, wherever the recognised type of each was fulfilled, one might truly say with poets,—

"The deadly germs of languor and disease
Died in the human frame, and purity
Blest with all gifts her earthly worshippers.
How vigorous is there the form of age!
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, nor care
Have stamp'd the seal of grey deformity.
How lovely the intrepid front of youth!
With meek-eyed courage, deck'd with freshest
grace—
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a name,
And elevated will, that journey'd on
Through life's phantasmal scene in fearlessness!"

This Catholic view of the constitution of human life suggested to blessed Gregory the plan of his septiform litany; for he divided all the people of the city into seven choirs, comprising in separate divisions the monks, the nuns, the children, the laymen, the widows, and the married women.† Duties were multiplied with the varieties of offices arising out of the order of society, so

that nothing could be more different than the type of a pure and happy state, in ages of faith, and that which the modern views of civilization would substitute in its place; for they would have only the one prosaic unspiritual life of passions misapplied and energies squandered upon ends that satisfy not—life monotonous and toilsome—life which sin, which avarice, not God, has made—recalling the unhappy days of ancient Rome, when there was only the rhetorician's life, the sophist's life, the tribune or the patrician life; none of which states to the intelligence could have ever yielded one ray of hope to gild the sad horizon of this brief existence, or to console in misery the poor diseased heart. The angel of the school saw nothing in the difference of rank and degrees established around him in the world but what he thought might have been fitting human existence before the fall. "In the state of innocence," saith he, "there was disparity from difference of sex, age, disposition, and knowledge; for man worked not by necessity, but by free-will, which implies that man may more or less apply his mind to do any thing or acquire any knowledge. Therefore some make greater proficiency in justice and wisdom than others. There was disparity, also, of bodily strength or constitution. Now it is true that equality is a cause of rendering mutual love equal; yet nevertheless amongst unequals there might be greater love than amongst equals, for a father loves his child more than a brother loves a brother. Disparity may arise from the part of God, that the beauty of order may be developed amongst men. It was not contrary to the dignity of the state of innocence that man should rule over man, since even amongst angels there are dominations; the dominion in the state of innocence would have been that by which a free man is directed towards his own good; and this dominion is good, because man is naturally a social animal; and the social life of man could not exist unless some one should preside to provide for the common welfare.*

How strange to many ears at present must be this proposition of St. Thomas: "*Nec inæqualitas hominum excluditur per innocentie statum.*" Who would now dare to utter it before a large assembly? It is that we have lost the idea of the possibility of such a combination; it is that we have lost the idea of the state of the rich being sanctified, of the state of rule and authority sanctified, of the state of knowledge and

* Epist. ccccxli.

† Hist. Miscell. Addit. Script. Rer. Italic tom. i.

* P. i. Q. xcvi. art. 4.

intellectual superiority sanctified. How few men are there who can now represent any fair and glorious ideal!—how few now living associated, in the minds of their contemporaries, with any complete, beautiful, or inspiring image of moral grandeur or loveliness! There are the personages of Greece and Rome, and of our modern novels perhaps, at every step; but those of holy or knightly books, on which our fathers fed their lofty hearts, may be sought in vain.

This supernatural direction of mind, by which the intention was fixed upon fulfilling the highest duty, was shown by the moralists of the ages of faith to be the only basis on which any structure of virtue could rise with security; and their remarks in verification are highly interesting. "I have seen," says St. John Climacus, "many and various germs of virtues planted by those who live in the world, watered with vain glory as if from the pollution of a sewer, dug round by ostentation, and manured with human praise, which, when they were afterwards transferred to the desert, where they were no longer seen by men of the world nor nourished with the miry waters of vain glory, have all suddenly dried up and withered away."*

With such morality the blessed clean of heart were not content. "Where is faith?" exclaims St. Jerome—"where is purity of soul?—where is the prayer of Jonas in the sea, and of the children in the furnace, and of Daniel among the lions, and of the thief upon the cross? Let every one examine his own heart, and he will perceive how rare it is to find a faithful soul which does nothing for glory or to please men. For he who fasts does not immediately fast to God; nor does he who stretches out his hand to the poor immediately lend to God. Vices are neighbours to virtues. It is difficult to be content with the judgment of God alone."† Difficult, no doubt, it was, in all ages, to possess such contentment; nevertheless we have only to consult the historical monuments which bear testimony to the manners of that middle period, to behold the difficulty overcome; for it is certainly no misrepresentation to affirm that men in those times had merely to look around them to witness indisputable evidence of faith and purity of soul—to see crowds who not alone abstained from wrong like virtuous Gentiles, loving truth and equity, and hating and resisting, as far as the Christian law permits, all things opposed to them with the steadiness

of instinct, but who attained to an angelic life through the love of God. The exception would not have been a man like Aristides, who was remarkable as being the only one amongst his contemporaries that was acknowledged to be above calumny; but however numerous might be the unhappy who fell from the height of their vocation, either in ecclesiastical or civil life, it was such persons in reality who formed the phenomenon that was pointed out as strange. Without being sceptical to a degree that would destroy the foundation of all knowledge, we cannot avoid arriving at this conclusion, that it was the spirit of multitudes in those ages to do nothing for glory or to win human praise—to be directed in all actions by the immediate sense of a religious duty, and to be content with the judgment of God alone. There was a soul of self-devotion in the whole order of the ancient Catholic state, pervading all its members, which imparted to men the faculty of rendering every path of life a way to heaven. Hear how a prince of Italy speaks, and you may learn from his words what was purity of heart in relation to a crown:—"My conscience is witness," says John Francis Picus of Mirandula, "that I do not covet sovereign power, nor am I prompted by the desire of riches; for I prefer a life of peaceful meditation and tranquil study to turbulent riches: and I would rather be governed than govern; but I perceive that unless there be one prince, our affairs will go on ill, and that we shall be devoured by continual seditions. Now that I say this sincerely may be easily credited; for what more horrible to a composed mind than popular commotions and the discussion of civil controversies?—what more abhorrent from the life of study and philosophy, which I love, than to fear continually hostile invasions, domestic treachery, enemies without, poison within? Nevertheless, since by my birth and by the laws I seem destined to fulfil the office of ruler, I will endure these things to the best of my power, and accommodate myself to them."*

"King Ferdinand covered with years and glory," says Roderick of Toledo, "was forewarned of his death in a vision, and soon after visited with the first symptoms of his malady. He caused himself to be carried, therefore, to the city of Leon, where he first went to the cathedral, and prostrated himself before the altars, praying that God would grant him a happy passage to immortal bliss. It being the night of our Lord's

* Scala Paradisi, grad. ii.
† S. Hieron. advers. Luciferianos.

* Joan. F. Pic. Mirand. Epist. Lib. i.

nativity, the king, though sick, assisted at matins with the clergy. The next day, the mass of Toledo, the Mozarabic, was solemnly celebrated in his presence, when he received the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood. On the next day, having called the bishops, abbots, and religious men, he caused himself to be carried into the church, and there, with his diadem on his head and clothed in the royal robes before the sarcophagus of St. Isidore, he cried out to the Lord with a clear voice, saying, 'Tua est potentia, tuum est regnum, Domine, tu es super omnes reges, tuo imperio omnia sunt subjecta: quod te donante accepi, restituo tibi regnum, tantum animam meam in æterna luce jubeas collocari.' So saying, laying aside his royal garments, he begged for mercy, and received from the bishops penitence and the grace of last unction. Clothed in sackcloth and covered with ashes, he passed two days in penitence and tears. On the third, at the hour of sext, it being the feast of St. John the Evangelist, full of days, he rendered up his spirit to God, and was buried in the same church of St. Isidore.* Thus could a king die.

If we were desired to point out men in regal authority resembling in their views and policy Hippias, after the detection of the conspiracy against him, who regarded all his subjects as his secret enemies, and who, instead of attempting to provide for their future welfare, aimed only at plundering them—who, being conscious of deserving their hatred, and feeling in proportion less secure from its effects, considered Attica as a domain held by a precarious tenure, and thought only of profiting as much as possible by his uncertain possession, taking care to place beyond their reach the funds which he raised by extraordinary imposts and artifices of all kinds,—it would not, assuredly, be to the annals of the middle ages, that one would first and most naturally look. To protect religion, and to multiply the institutions which it formed for the diffusion of virtue and happiness among the people, was then the recognised duty of all rulers; and it must never be forgotten what numbers of them discharged it with fidelity. The Epitaph on Louis VII. of France gave glorious testimony of his having merited a place amongst them:—

"*Servula tristis, inops, aliquo sub rege: sub isto
Floruit ecclesia, libera, læta, potens.*"†

* Moderici Toletani de Rebus Hispaniæ, Lib. vi. c. 14.

† Duchesne, tom. iv.

The situations that might be supposed, at first, least reconcilable with the mystic sanctity of the clean of heart would be found, upon a second view, to have formed no exception to what was then the general law of all social positions. Witness, for example, the profession of arms:—"Chivalry," says a modern French writer, "is a real event of history—a great institution of the middle ages; its image is reflected in the manners and details given by the romances of chivalry, which in this respect may be called a chronicle of the middle ages, no less true than even the chronicle of St. Denis."* Many other authors of modern times have attempted to throw discredit upon the representation of honour and purity which belonged to the ancient military character in ages of faith, when Sir Percival was a model for the imitation of its youth; and even this writer, in the very same work, is so inconsistent as to ask, "What is the truth on which has been embroidered this smiling fiction of chivalry?" They are perhaps misled by an exclusive attention to the characters and manners around them, and a notion that they must always have been the same; but they should consider whether there be not reason to fear lest it should be only what was merely animal in the ancient chivalry,—courage, egotism, ferocity, the high excitement and the battle-cry, which had survived in the profession—while what was divine, and spiritual, and mystic in its constitution has passed away, including piety, grace, the sanctifying direction of the thoughts to some just and holy end—the mind, in short, that would suggest the memorable reply, "*Milites sumus, imperator, tui, sed tamen servi Dei: tibi militiam debemus, illi innocentiam.*"

It was this divine and spiritual guidance of the intention which, under the sanction of Christ, as conveyed in his answer to the soldiers, was supposed in the middle ages to render the profession of arms reconcilable with the beatitude of the clean of heart. "The duty of a knight," King Alfred used to say, "consists in providing that the church should have peace, and that the labourers should be undisturbed." No adverse fortune could disturb the serene felicity of such men—like the strong oak, which, when the Alpine blasts contend, and the leaves and branches are scattered on the ground, still adheres to the rock, and with its deep roots cleaves to the earth:—

* Villemain, *Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age*, 260.

"Haud secus assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus
heros
Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas :
Mens immota manet, lacrymæ volvuntur inanes."*

Witness Guido de Montigny, who bore the standard of Philip Augustus at the battle of Bovines :—

"— qui mente immobilis ut mons
Vexillum regale die portavit in illo ;"

and, under more trying circumstances, witness the moral courage of Lorenzo Priuli, elected doge of Venice at a moment when the triple scourge of war, pestilence, and famine overwhelmed his country, and who on the day of his inauguration commenced his address to the people with these words :—"Etiam si ambulavero in medio umbræ mortis, non timebo mala, quoniam tu mecum es."†

Abbon, the monk, in his poem on the siege of Paris, thus relates the death of one of its defenders :—

"Happy Robert, struck by an arrow, breathed his last !"

"Robbertus felix jaculo spiravit ibidem."‡

"After all," says a modern French author, "the Christian hero is an admirable character. The people whom he defends regards him as their father; he protects the labourer and the harvest; he prevents injustice; he is an angel of war whom God sends to mitigate that scourge; cities open their gates at the mere rumour of his justice; ramparts fall down before his virtues; he joins to the warrior's courage the charity of the Gospel; his conversation moves and instructs; his words have the grace of a perfect simplicity; one is astonished to find so much sweetness in a man who lives in the midst of perils, as the honey is concealed under the bark of the oak which has braved the storm." Would you trace the operation of the purifying spirit in the great events which constituted a new military epoch in the history of the world, and observe the thoughts which moved the Pilgrim and the red-cross Knight, to undertake the deliverance of the Holy Land? Hear a contemporary author whose sincerity is beyond suspicion. "We speak," says Guibert de Nogent, "of the new and incomparable expedition of Jerusalem. To undertake this,

not the ambition of empty fame, not the love of riches, nor the desire of extending territories, have excited our people; not even, what would be excusable, the defence of liberty or of the public good, has been the motive, but their sole desire and object were to defend the holy church, endangered by the incursions of the barbarous nations, and by the invasion of Gentiles. For this pious wish was in the mind of every one, that the equestrian order and the vulgar multitude, which, after the example of Paganism, had been accustomed to occupy themselves in mutual slaughter might, in this way, find in arms a new mode of obtaining salvation; so that without embracing the monastic profession, or wholly leaving the world, they might, under their usual habit, perform their respective duties and win the grace of God."* John, the abbot of Casa Maria, in his letter to St. Bernard relating the afflictions of the Crusaders in Palestine, and showing with what humility they were received by them, as sent for their purification, adds this remarkable testimony, "those who have returned have assured me that they have seen many die there, who said, that they preferred dying to returning, lest they should fall again into sins."†

James the First, King of Aragon, who recovered three kingdoms to Christianity, from the Moors, and evinced the love which animated him, by causing to be erected two thousand churches, furnished a striking instance, in his own person, of the purity and constancy of this faith. Bernardine Gomesius relates, that when this great king was preparing to set out on his expedition to Jerusalem, he came to Saragossa, where he was met by the queen, his daughter, with Peter and James, and also Sanctius the Archbishop, all of whom, as if in conspiracy, surrounded him, some embracing his neck, others falling at his feet, with tears and groans, praying that he would renounce so long and perilous a journey, and not leave them desolate as those who were to see his face no more. To whom the king replied, after embracing them all most lovingly, "In vain do you weep and afflict yourselves with lamentations, attempting to turn me aside from this holy expedition; since, what I owe to the celestial and common parent, God, is by far to be preferred to the things which I owe, on human grounds, to you, although my dearest children; for I have

* IV. 445.

† Fasti Ducales, 210. Venice, 1696, ap. Rio.

‡ Lib. i.

* Gesta Dei per Francos.

† B. Bern. Epist. cccxxxvi.

done what I could for you, to whom I leave far more than I received from my parents, and I have enriched you all with the glory of my deeds, which constitutes the best of patrimonies. Now the same celestial father calls me elsewhere: for what is greater than to recover the Sepulchre of his beloved Son Jesus Christ, and to rescue that gracious and holy land marked with his footsteps, from the impious enemies of his sacred name, who now occupy it? For I am bound to this expedition by the desire of my mind, and as if by a vow made in the beginning of my reign; also because hitherto Spaniards alone, of all kings, have been prevented from engaging in it, and lastly because the present is a favourable opportunity, two emperors, and a mighty force of land and sea combining, so that not to co-operate in such a pious and honourable task, would be not only disgraceful to the Spanish name, but also impious and detestable. In proportion too as our far-advanced age brings nearer to us the time of our death, we are the more admonished to pour out for Christ what is left of our life; for I will not refuse to die for him who did not refuse to die for me." So saying, amidst tears and lamentations, and being no longer able to speak, having saluted all, he separated from them, and returned to Barcelona.*

Whatever views men may entertain respecting the cause itself, no one probably will refuse to admit, on the evidence of such passages, that it was defended by men of pure and simple hearts. Upon such good grounds did Dante build, when he placed the Crusader's spirit in the joys of paradise, for there he finds his ancestor Cacciaguido, who thus beautifully describes the death, which sent him to possess them.

"——— I follow'd then

The Emperor Conrad; and his knighthood he
Did gird on me; in such good part he took
My valiant service. After him I went
To testify against that evil law,
Whose people, by the shepherd's fault, possess
Your right, usurping. There, by that foul crew,
Was I releas'd from the deceitful world
Whose base affection many a spirit soils:
And from the martyrdom came to this peace."†

Upon the whole then, from even this rapid glance at ancient manners, it will be sufficiently clear, that there was no need, in these ages of long and artful speech, to colour the different pursuits of life, each

being followed with such pure intention. All that was in the heart could have been explained in a few simple words, like those of saintly Adalbert, in answer to the barbarians, who asked him to give some account of himself after they had struck him to the earth, while he was preaching on a little island in a river of Prussian Pomerania. "I am a slave," was his reply, "by name Adalbert, by profession a monk, formerly a bishop, now your apostle. The object of my journey is your salvation; that you may forsake your dumb idols, acknowledge your Creator, the only true God; and that by believing in him you may inherit everlasting life!" From the king to the lowest vassal, every one could give a reason of the office which he had to discharge, in as clear and precise terms, though, in his own eyes, it was encompassed with a mystic light of true glory.

But we cannot remain longer to enjoy this extensive and richly varied prospect. Let us only remark, in descending, that it is the direction of the intention, and steady adherence to the duty prescribed, which has caused so many of the modern investigators of history, to lose the object of their toil. Their hunting through these regions is ardent, desperate, but in vain. They beat every cover—Hagiography, canon law, state papers, asceticism, scholastic controversy. They are soon in full cry after the game: they follow it closely, discover all its turns, and when every one expects to see them secure it, some strange and unaccountable delusion sends them away in quite an opposite direction. An impenetrable mist arises, which soon reduces to a piteous condition these late boasters, who may now, not undeservedly, be taunted with the appellation of despatchers of history, as their phrase was ever, that, in few words, they would despatch it. All their time and labour have been lost. The saint or hero, whose memory they pursued, with an aversion ill concealed by their professions of impartiality, vanishes from their view. The hallowed and devoted thoughts are hidden from them; so instead of the inspiring sentences of old Catholic song, we are presented with the Thucydidean phrase, "The truest motive though least manifest in word." They sought in fact themselves in history, and they have even found themselves, and well for them if it be not to their own destruction. Judging then of others from what they find within themselves, every thing is easily seen through and explained, and of course,

* Bernardini Gomezi de Vita Jacobi I. Arag.
Lib. xvii.

† Cant. xv.

in place of Catholic worthies, we find only men of the nineteenth century. History has proved to them like a magician's wood which receives the knight and presents only a horrid phantom to his pursuer, a deformed spectral image to strike at which would be only beating the air. Hypocrites, blasphemers, magicians, ventriloquists, harlequins, murderers, seducers, and beings

with the pride of Satan, rise up before them, where others, in the rays of the Eternal Wisdom, had seen the holy and the pure of heart. Let us leave them shrouded in the mists of earth, combatting these phantoms: their hounds may bark on, but their chase will ever have the same result; for this is mystic ground, and they who see no charity can find no truth.

CHAPTER III.

THE literature of the ages of faith, on which we have thrown a hasty glance in the preceding books, while tracing the influence which it received from humbleness of mind and the merciful spirit, would afford a vast field for delightful study if we were permitted by our limits to consider it fully in relation to the beatitude of the clean of heart. The course before us, however, is so extensive, and it will shortly lead us upon ground which so closely borders upon this domain, that I shall content myself at present with a few brief observations, which will be of no small avail if they can suggest to others, better skilled, the idea of pursuing for themselves this most interesting investigation.

The objection so often noticed to the literature of the middle ages, that it is wholly theological, and tinged with the views of men inhabiting a cloister, must present itself, in the first place, as furnishing evidence of the fact, which it is the object of this chapter to establish. That there is some truth in the charge cannot be doubted, since there could not be found a more appropriate motto for the whole learning of that period, than the words of St. Augustin: "*Omnis mihi copia quæ Deus meus non est, egestas est.*"* That one whole department of modern literature, and not the least important where the associations of faith have perished, was comparatively wanting in the middle ages, might almost be inferred from the canons of Engelram, bishop of

Metz, in the eighth century, which decree, that whoever has composed and disseminated amongst the people any writing injurious to the reputation of another, should be scourged if he could not prove what he advanced, and that whoever should first find such a writing was to tear it in pieces, on pain of being treated as its author."*

Were we, however, to analyse the numerous popular charges against the literary productions of the middle ages, whatever might be the terms in which they were conveyed, I believe we should find that most of them sprung from no other source but that which prompts Euripides to ridicule Æschylus in the shades, who when the latter had boasted, in recommendation of himself, that he had never introduced amatory scenes into his pieces, replies to him:

Μὰ Δι' οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν τῆς Ἀφροδίτης οὐδέν σοι.†

This it is, in reality, which causes so many volumes of the middle ages to slumber upon shelves, and to be consigned to moths and obscurity, as being unreadable, wearisome, and barbarous; while every hand holds some book exhibiting the stops that train our intellects to vain delight, which bears proof of having been written, not indeed in a cell, or upon a buckler, but in some palace of indolence, amidst wine and merriment, which might remind one of the reply of Lainez, when surprise was expressed on his being found, at eight o'clock in the morning, in the king's library, after a late supper:

* Longueval, Hist. de l'Eglis. Gal. v. 12.

† Aristoph. Ranæ, 1057.

* Confess. xiii. 8.

"Regnat nocte calix, volvuntur biblia mane,
Cum Phœbo Bacchus dividit imperium."

It is not that any sweet affection of our nature is altogether banished from these ancient books, but that every image is shrouded in such a mystic robe of innocence and purity, that all attraction for the vitiated fancy is destroyed. The poet, in his Lay of the Last Minstrel, has caught the true spirit of this ancient literature, when, after relating the astonishment of Margaret of Branksome on beholding Cranstoun stalking below within the castle court, into which he had been enabled, by his goblin page, to pass undiscovered, he continues:

"Oft have I mused what purpose bad
That vile malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round :
For happy love's a heavenly sight,
And by a vile malignant sprite,
In such no joy is found :
And oft I've deem'd, perchance he thought
Their erring passion might have wrought
Sorrow, and sin, and shame,
And death to Cranstoun's gallant knight,
And to the gentle lady bright
Disgrace, and loss of fame.
But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that loved so well ;
True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven.
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly ;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not die ;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind."

This was the affection which breaks out often in an unexpected manner in monuments which attest the existence of love in the middle ages ; as in the Prayer-book of Charles the Bald, written in letters of gold, in which we find this verse added to the Litanies at the end : " Ut Hirminrudim conjugem nostram conservare digneris, te rogamus, audi nos." The indulgence of the passions as exhibited, and often recommended, in the modern literature, was so opposed to the public sense of Catholic states in ages of faith, that instruction was conveyed in every form imaginable, to warn men from its danger. Under an image of the blessed Virgin and the Divine Child, inscriptions used to be placed for this purpose in the streets of cities. There is an ancient house near Cadenabbia, on the Lake of Como, upon which may still be read these lines, beneath a fresco painting of the Virgin Mother : " Sin is like the fire,

which begins by little and little. He who follows profane love, departs far from God. The contumacious sinner has no peace with heaven. Of that which you commit to-day, the fruit you will to-morrow taste. The crucifix is a great book to the man who hath a fixed regard."

Undoubtedly there can be discovered here and there books of the middle ages which can satisfy any taste, however abject, as the collectors of facetiæ need not be told, who love to furnish out their shelves ; but the picture of the affections by the poet I have cited is strictly historical, for any other would have been in violation of the chivalrous type ; and those who in the sixteenth century began to innovate and dissolve the mysticism, and invent tales in the spirit of Boccaccio, were in Catholic society regarded as heretics, while their works were committed to the flames amidst the execrations of the people. At the same time we may remark, that to purity of heart the ages of faith were indebted also for the universality of the range which was open to poetry and literature ; and even, though perhaps at rare and brief intervals, for the enjoyment of dramatic representations, in accordance with the fancy of the innocent and the taste of the religious. So early indeed as in the fifth century we find that actors were excommunicated by a decree of the Council of Arles, yet the decision of St. Antoninus with respect to the compatibility of such recreations with the Christian profession,* and also the express sanction of the Angel of the School, are facts of no small importance in the history of dramatic literature. St. Thomas, whose sentiments respecting every obstacle to angelic purity may be conceived, concludes his judgment on this point in these words : " All things which are useful to human society, can be considered as lawful offices. And therefore, even the office of actors, which is ordained to afford recreation to men, is not in itself unlawful, nor are they in a state of sin, provided they use that play moderately, that is, not using any unlawful words or actions, either in themselves shameful, or calculated to injure their neighbours, and do not indulge in that play at improper seasons ; consequently they who moderately assist them, do not sin."† Perhaps, however, the belief in the possibility of such a condition of the drama, constitutes

* P. 2. tit. 23. § 14.

† II. 2. Q. 168. art. 3. ad. 3.

the most curious part of this passage; for in practice, it is to be feared, the adjustment could have been at no time a task without difficulty; though still it is true, that it was in later ages, when Benedict XIV. declared that it was with regret he found himself obliged to tolerate theatres in Rome, and in other cities of the ecclesiastical states.

That the theological character of the literature of the middle ages, which is made a ground of objection to it, presents the most remarkable evidence of the moral purity of men in those times, is a proposition which does not admit of being questioned. What might not be adduced, if our limits permitted us to speak of the wonderful effects of the angelic life upon the eloquence of preachers, and the style of those exquisite compositions, by which ascetic writers taught the divine art of meditation and conference with God! But I must refer the reader to the work of Goerres for reflections on this theme.

Another characteristic of the literature of the ages of faith, which affords evidence of the purity which had been imparted to the human heart, is its inherent antipathy to paganism. This literary revolution may be witnessed in the earliest Christian works, as in those of Clemens Alexandrinus and Minutius Felix, exposing the turpitudes of heathen mythology,* and in those of St. Augustin, referring to the impure sectaries of the East. But it is complete in the works of the middle age, when men whose eyes were opened, could endure no more the filth of paganism, and laboured to efface its stains. Accordingly no language can be too strong to express the change which was effected in the European mind by the revival of the pagan literature in the sixteenth century, when men began not only to revere, as the most glorious types of humanity, such names as Tacitus and Suetonius, whom the philosophers of the middle age used to speak of as priests of idols, ambitious, wicked, and adulterous, if their lives might be judged of from their own words, but even to extol as poetical and humane that Greek mythology, the pernicious influence of which had been exposed with so much feeling by the wiser heathens themselves, as may be witnessed in the work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.† It is not that the monastic literature evinced no acquaintance with

the heathen authors. A French writer observes, that "a learned monk of the twelfth century had a great number of ideas, philosophic, moral, and literary, in common with Cicero;"* but that every thing repugnant to Christianity was rejected with abhorrence, and nothing suffered, as it were, to enter, until clothed, at least for once, in a religious habit.

During the middle ages the licentious poets of Greece and Rome were suffered to slumber in the repositories of the ancient learning. To substitute for lascivious amours and gross indecencies, the praise of chastity and the triumphs of faith over the temptations of nature, was indeed the aim of many, who, like Roswitha, attempted to imitate the heathen writers; but in general they struck out new paths for themselves; and in the Poems of a St. Avitus, a Dante, and a Calderon, the wisdom of Christians was seen to be more beautiful than the fancy of the heathens: "Incomparabiliter pulchrior," says St. Augustin, "est veritas Christianorum quam Helena Græcorum."† There was sung no Bacchus and no Io Pæan, but three Persons in the Godhead, and one Person that nature and the human joined. There were no classical imitations that interfered with faith; witness St. Aldhelm's invocation, in his poem *De Laude Virginum*:

"Non rogo ruricolæ versus, et commata Musas:
Non peto Castalidas metrorum cantica nymphas
Quas dicunt Heliconæ jugum servare supernum;
Nec precor, ut Phœbus linguam sermone loquacem
Dedat, quem Delo peperit Latona creatrix:
Sed potius nitar precibus pulsare Tonantem
Qui nobis placidi confert oracula verbi.
Verbum de Verbo peto, hoc psalmista canebat.
Sic Patris et Proles dignetur Spiritus almus,
Auxilium fragili clementer dedere servo."

Poetry in general, in ages of faith, could yield remarkable evidence of the purification of the human heart. Many were believed to write verses through the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God. Cedman, the Anglo-Saxon, whose history Bede relates, Joseph, the hymnographer amongst the Greeks in the ninth century, and in later times Jacoponus, were regarded by their contemporaries as having received the gift of song from heaven; and truly no one who has ever heard their compositions, and reflected on the relation in which they stood to God and to the world, can judge that opinion strange.‡

* Protrepticus.

† Antiq. Rom. Lib. ii. c. 20.

* Villemain, *Tableau de la Littérature au Moyen Age*, i. 100.

† Epist. X.

‡ Goerres *die Christliche Mystik* il. 161.

The observation of Ælred of Rivaulx, that no page pleased him which was not sweetened with the Saviour's name, might be extended even to the views of history, which were adopted by men of the middle ages; for in all their compendiums, the events of heathen times are represented in connexion with the eternal designs of Almighty Providence to visit and redeem the world. Thus the Duchess of Beneventum, who, we are told, was familiar with the golden sayings of the philosophers, and the gemmed sentences of poets, objected to Eutropius, that as a pagan he says nothing of Christian history, and therefore Paul the Deacon, monk of Monte Cassino, translated it, "aornéede addictions Catholiques." Learning, in their eyes, derived all its value from the religious point of view. Hugo of St. Victor says to a great doctor, "I love indeed your erudition, but I love still more to contemplate Him; because what I love in your erudition, is only lovely to me from its leading me to contemplate Him."*

We have before had occasion to observe, that the purest motives, and the most sincere love of truth, are visible in those chronicles of the middle age, at which so many heartless and devoted men disinterestedly toiled. One cannot but feel assured of their sincerity, even from the slight incidental allusions to themselves, which escape them; as when, in the beginning of his eleventh book, Hieronymus Rubeus, the learned and noble physician, of Ravenna, says, "After seventeen years spent in writing this history of Ravenna, I had abandoned all idea of writing more, or of reading any thing except what was sacred and pious, that to my Lord calling I might not come wholly unprepared."† This unpremeditated opening of their interior gives a glimpse, which every reader must know how to appreciate. These works were often the fruits of holy obedience too; as when, 1099, by command of Eustorgius, bishop of Limoges, and the advice of Gaubert the Norman, abbot of Usercia, Gregory Beshade de Turribus, a knight of most subtle genius, and imbued in some degree with letters, composed a huge volume, in vulgar rythme, on the Deliverance of Jerusalem, on which work he spent twelve years.‡ Voigt observing, that no work throws such light upon the history

of Prussia in the fourteenth century, as the Annals composed in 1390, by John of Pusilie, President of the Chapter of Pomerania, a Prussian priest, remarks, that it displays not only an accurate knowledge of events, but a most ardent love of truth; and in fact what else could have induced these simple-minded holy men to write books? It is each of these, indeed, who might have justly used the poet's words, and said, "From the records of my youthful state, and from the love of bards and sages old, have I collected language to unfold truth to my countrymen."

Speaking of Elfric, Abbot of Peterborough, a late author says, "His only motives were a Christian love of his kind, and a deep sense of the importance of wisdom, or in part, perhaps, a generous desire to live in the memory of Englishmen."*

Such were the writers who, in the middle ages, inspired in the public mind a passion for history, which was generally possessed in connexion with a love for sacred literature, as in the instance of that brave knight and renowned poet the Landgrave Hermann, of Thuringia, in the thirteenth century, who is styled *Historiarum sacramque lectionum amator*.†

Geoffrey de Beaulieu the Dominican, confessor of St. Louis during twenty-two years, who followed him every where till he received his last breath, and Guillaume de Chartres, chaplain to the king, who continued also ever at his side, are writers who may be cited as true representatives, of the historians of the middle ages, writing from personal knowledge, writing with love; for after the death of St. Louis, Geoffrey would never quit the body, but day and night was always praying by the coffin, whether on board the ship, or on the road through Lombardy and Saxony; writing through holy obedience, for Pope Gregory X. ordered him to write the king's life, which was continued by Guillaume de Chartres, who had suffered imprisonment with him, during which time he used to recite every day the office before him; and writing without any view to magnify themselves; for he describes in detail the courage of the king in prison, but passes over his own sufferings, and never speaks of himself excepting through necessity, and then in few words.

Leo of Ostia furnishes another example, when about to write the history of Desi-

* Lib. Expos. in Cœlest. Hierarch.

† In Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. tom. vii.

‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 522.

* Dissection of the Saxon Chronicle, 67.

† Paulin. Annal. Isenac.

derius, Abbot of Monte Cassino; for he speaks thus: "Many things I have learned from his own truth-telling lips, while with too great goodness choosing to have me at his side. Some I have heard from certain priors, others lastly I relate from what I have seen with my own eyes, having been with him almost to the day of his death. Therefore I wish to make my reader assured that I shall make no extrinsic additions to this little work, and that I shall write nothing concerning him but what I have found to be true, as one who remembers having read, with a simple understanding, "*Perdes, Domine, omnes qui loquuntur mendacium.*"*

Petrus Diacanus being ordered to continue the work of Leo, speaks in these terms: "When I see so many and such men in this sacred cloister full of liberal discipline, I feel inclined to succumb to the burden imposed upon me. As for my means of information, from the time of Abbot Gerard, who first received me into the school of Mount Cassino, I have heard some of these things from the mouth of the venerable Abbot Seniorecto, and others I have seen with my own eyes while attending the imperial court for the cause of the monastery, and others I have heard from our priors, and other faithful men. If it would not have displeased your paternity, I should have left the task to others, for I have never applied to liberal discipline, but from my first noviciate I have always, by Christ's grace, been occupied with divine expositions and ancient annals. But may He who puts into the mouth of his servants to speak how and what and when he wishes, grant me words, for all wisdom is from God; and if any one want wisdom, let him ask it from God, and he will fill him. And as there are some things, perhaps, in which I deserve to be reprehended by the wise, let this be imputed to our weakness; but if there be any thing blameless, let them ascribe it not to me but to God."†

Indeed, the simplicity and humility of their language might alone convince any one that they wrote without any sinister aim. Gaufred Malaterra, the monk, addresses the venerable Bishop of Catana, saying, "Having had the unhappy mundane course with Martha, I was commanded by Roger, Count of Sicily, to write this History of the Conquest of Calabria

and Sicily, by Robert Guiscard and his brother, in a plain and clear style, that every one could understand."*

If sincerity of intention can be inferred from the style of chronicles, it is hardly necessary to add, that men whose works were more immediately concerned with philosophy, evinced a love of truth no less pure and devoted. But how can one express the impressions of this kind, made by the didactic treatises of the middle age? who can describe the exquisite tone of candour which pervades them? tone inimitable, which almost imparts to all who hear it the privilege of Him who can discern hearts: tone, in short, which indicated faith, and which in every age is the same; for it is precisely identical whether we find it in the treatises of a Hugo of St. Victor, in the eleventh century, or in our own time, in the few hasty letters of a Spenser, in whom one may behold the life of those ancient meek ones, who to an erring world were the chosen messengers of Christ.

With respect to those writings, which were the farthest removed from laying claim to merit as literary compositions, I cannot but think that there was something even in the rusticity of their style that could yield a degree of security to those who read them.

The author of *Horologium Devotionis circa vitam Christi*, after saying in his Prologue that he composed it at the prayer of a certain devout soldier of happy memory, whose name is known to God, continues in these terms: "I, brother Bertold, a priest of the order of Preachers, having departed flying away, and remained in solitude seven years, have composed one little book, in the Teutonic tongue, on the life of Christ, his passion, and most dolorous death, which I have named the Clock of Devotion; but because things written in the Teutonic tongue have very little taste to learned men, on that account I have taken pains to transfer the said book into Latin, and with the help of God, grammatical—in *Latinum et in grammaticam Dei adjutorio transferri curavi*, in a plain style, without rhetorical colouring, lest devotion should be destroyed by curiosity, and the adornment of words." This is simple, sooth; yet those who had drunk deep of the old learning, were fond even of the unambitious, artless manner, in which it was conveyed. The more point-device and

* *Chronic. S. Monast. Cas. Lib. iii. Prolog.*

† *Chron. Casinen. Lib. iv. Prolog.*

* *Ganfredi Monachi Hist. Lib. i.*

irritable tone of later writers, though assumed apparently to please, would have often offended the delicate tact which apprised them, in books that seemed the least suspicious, of some latent danger to purity or truth. Certainly it requires no mystic gift of vision, like that which enabled the holy Joseph of Cupertino to discern from the countenance of a stranger what was in his heart, to discover through the polished surface of many books, written in later times, the stains of interior impurity. The glance of an ordinary mortal without extacy, is quite sufficient for detecting it. And it may assuredly be affirmed, that a reflecting student, after reading the remarks of Malebranche on the style of Seneca and Montaigne, will be little disposed to nauseate that of the monastic literature. "The pleasure which one takes in reading these authors," says this metaphysician, "springs from concupiscence, and it fortifies the passions. Generally, the pleasure which we take in different manners of writing arises from nothing else but the secret corruption of our hearts."* Montaigne himself says, "In my time I am deceived if the worst books be not those which have gained the most popular favour:" a judgment to which Joseph Scaliger would agree; for he says, "In this kingdom of France there is given liberty of writing to all men, but the faculty of writing truly and rightly only to a few."† And again, "Daily I see many persons studious, but few learned; amongst the learned, few ingenious; amongst the half learned, no good men; and so letters, the only consolation of the human race, are now in the place of a pestilence and a scourge."‡ If you pursue the comparison down to later times, you will find that these inventions of men, who, as Pasquier says, "have more leisure than learning," only verify the remark of Scaliger, that "amongst so many thousand authors you shall scarce find one, by reading of whom you shall be any whit better, but rather much worse,"§ and perhaps there are many of them which prove the truth of Cato's prediction, when he said, "gens ista quoties litteras suas dabit omnia perdet." The contrast, in short, between the literature of the ages of faith, and that of later times, is the same as that which exists between the men themselves. The one tranquil with luminous piety, the other turbulent with dark desires.

* Lib. ii. 5. † Jos. Scaligeri Epist. Lib. i. 3.
‡ Id. 96. § Epist. ad Petav.

But our observation must not be confined to literature:—this is only one side of the spacious and richly varied poetic field.

Goerres, in his admirable work on Christian Mysticism, has remarked the influence of ascetic purity upon musical science, in the middle ages. The unearthly tones which pervade the old Catholic compositions, are indeed a sufficient proof of spiritual communion with a holier world. The gift of song was imparted to many purified souls, as to Hildegard, and the saintly sisters of St. Otinga. The holy Catherine, of Bologna, with eyes turned to heaven, repeated to her astonished sisters the song which she had heard in praise of God, when so far spent with sickness, that she had received the last unction: such jubilation filled her heart, while repeating to them that sweet song, that all who saw her thought that she must die for joy; but she remained one year more on earth. The holy Hermann Joseph, of Steinfeld, while composing a hymn in honour of St. Ursula, is said to have received aid from the pure spirits which he loved for sake of Jesus; and Palestrina himself, has said of his best compositions, that he only wrote what he had heard angels sing.* With music, painting also experienced the influence of purified souls.

Rio remarks, in his charming book on Christian Art, that the works of painters, as those of poets, when encouraged and eulogised by their contemporaries and fellow countrymen, are the faithful mirror of the national genius; and truly, during the middle ages, amongst painters, the mystic clean of heart appeared conspicuous. The judgment of the moderns can be appealed to here, and the poet's words on a picture of the Assumption, by Murillo, adduced in proof: for he exclaims,—

"What innocence, what love, what loveliness,
What purity must have familiar been
Unto thy soul, before it could express
The holy beauty in that visage seen!"†

What might he not have said on the sublime and astonishing figure of St. Francis receiving the stigmata, by Guercino, which is in the church of Sancta Maria in Carignano at Genoa? What on the master-pieces of Francesco Francia, or on the paintings of the mystic school in Italy, before a fondness for the mere imitation of uninspired nature, and the

* Christliche Mystik ii. 157.

† Trench.

taste for pagan models, had created a new race of artists disdainful of the old? What might not be said on that seraphic expression, full of sweet desire, which constitutes the peculiar merit of the Umbrian School, in the works of Perugino and his disciples, or indeed in any of the old pictures of devotion, in our ancient churches, before modern hands had corrected them as barbarous? "Frequently," says this eloquent author, "we pass in proud disdain before miraculous pictures, which have exercised the most delicious influence on an innumerable multitude of souls, during the course of many ages. We do not consider that this mute image of the Madonna and the infant Jesus, has spoken a mysterious and consoling language to more than one heart, sufficiently humble and pure to comprehend it, and that there are no tears perhaps more precious before God, than those which have moistened the stone of these modest oratories."* In fact, as few need be reminded, the artist of the middle age was frequently a man of saintly interior life, so that the poet, here cited, did not err in his conclusion, that he must have had a pure heart. Giovanni of Pisa, the great sculptor who made the pulpit of the Cathedral, representing many events in the life of Christ, which work was finished in 1320, placed these verses on it—

"Laudo Deum verum, per quem sunt optima rerum,
Qui dedit has puras hominem formare figuras."

Giotto is commemorated as having been no less a good Christian than excellent painter. "Michael Angelo," says Vasari, "loved much the holy Scriptures as a good christian—he greatly loved the beauty of the human figure, but never with dishonest thought." Speaking of Ambrogio Lorenzetti, painter of Sienna, the same author observes, "how he was learned and good, and kept company with the best men; how every thing bespoke in him the lover of wisdom; and how constant he was, and pious." "Truly," he adds, "one cannot say how much gentle customs and modesty, with other virtues, conduce to all arts, and particularly to that which has such a connexion with intelligence." Gentil Bellini, in a grand painting which represents a miracle effected by a portion of the cross, placed under it this simple and affecting inscription:—"Gentilis Bellinus amore

incensus crucis, 1490." John of Fiesoli belonged to the Dominican order, in which he was so revered for sanctity, that the brethren styled him the angelic. "Brother Angelico might have led," says Vasari, "a very happy life in the world, but as he wished, above all things, to provide for the salvation of his soul, he embraced a religious life, without renouncing his no less decided vocation for painting, reconciling thus the care of his eternal happiness, with the acquisition of an immortal name amongst men." Vasari concludes that such an extraordinary talent as he possessed could only be the attendant on the highest sanctity, for to succeed as he did in religious subjects, the artist himself must be religious and holy. Called to Rome by Pope Eugene IV., his paintings in the Vatican, of the histories of St. Lawrence and of St. Stephen, admirable as they were, did not make such an impression on the pontiff as the soul of the artist, so that the see of Florence, being vacant, he conceived the idea of conferring upon him the Archiepiscopal office; but the humility of brother Angelico prevailed, and it was the praise with which he then spoke of brother Antoninus, that occasioned the latter to be made Archbishop of Florence by Nicholas V. At the court of Rome he lived as in his cloister, and Pope Nicholas was obliged to compel him, on obedience, to moderate his austerities. He never painted a crucifixion without shedding many tears, and worked at that, as also at the figures of the blessed Virgin, always on his knees. Michael Angelo said, that it was humanly impossible to paint such a blessed form as he composed of Mary, in his picture of the Annunciation: the painter must have beheld her. And Goerres says, that in this, as in many other of his works, besides the exquisite grace and beauty resulting from skill, it is impossible not to recognise a still higher beauty, evincing all the characteristics of mystic vision. James the German, on his return from the Holy Land, furnished another instance of this wonderful combination of art and purity. Of his heroic obedience as a monk, a curious instance is recorded: on one occasion, having placed a beautiful painting on glass in the furnace, the prior, to prove his merit, ordered him to take his black cap and go into the streets to beg alms; he complied without a word, and remained absent many hours; on his return he went anxiously to the furnace, and found that all had succeeded; the

* De l'Art Chretien, 161.

painting, in the lines and colours, had become faultless, and in fact incomparable.* Lippo Dalmasio, in whom the traditional piety of the old Bolognese school was so conspicuous, may be added to these great examples, for he like Jacopo Avanzi would paint nothing but images of the blessed Virgin, and he never sat down to paint without having fasted the day before, and gone to communion on the morning itself, in order to purify his imagination and sanctify his pencil. In his latter days he embraced the monastic life, and continued to paint Madonnas, which he distributed as alms among the people. Guido discerned something supernatural in his paintings, and affirmed that no study or talents could give the power of combining, in a figure, such holiness, modesty, and purity. He used often to be seen in an ecstasy before one of his pictures, when uncovered on some festival of the blessed Virgin. That the artist of the middle ages regarded himself as the Preacher's assistant, is expressly affirmed by Buffalmacco, one of the pupils of Giotto; "As for us painters," saith he, "our sole business is to make saints, holy men, and holy women, on walls and over altars, in order that by their means, men, to the great despite of demons, may be more disposed to piety and virtue."†

It was the spirit of mutual edification which gave rise to the confraternity of painters, under the invocation of St. Luke, in 1360. They had their periodical meetings not from ambition to communicate their discoveries, and receive homage from each other, but simply to sing the praise of God. Evidence of the number of the pure, results not only from observing the character and works of the artists themselves, but also from an examination of the state of the public mind, in those ages, in relation to art, and of the taste of that society which so highly appreciated and encouraged them. Lorenzo Costa painted for the chapel of John Bentivoglio, in the church of St. James at Bologna a portrait of that nobleman, with his wife, his four sons, and his seven daughters, beneath an image of the blessed Virgin; and the father's prayer is thus expressed,—

* Goerres *Christliche Mystik* ii. 155.

† Vasari.

"Me, patriam, et dulces carâ cum conjuge natos,
Commendo precibus, Virgo beata, tuis."

It was for the confraternity of St. Mark, and of St. John the Evangelist, that Gentil Bellini executed many magnificent paintings. Capaccio traced the legend of St. Ursula, in a series of eight great pictures, for the confraternity which bears her name, the history of St. Jerome, and that of St. George for another confraternity, and the history of the Protomartyr, for the brotherhood of St. Stephen. Mansueti was similarly encouraged at Venice, to paint for two confraternities of St. Mark and St. John.

Now from this hasty glance at artists, and the condition of art in the middle ages, it is clear that much and unobjectionable evidence, of the kind which we require, can be collected from them. If there be any doubt, let men only consider whether they deem it possible, that such a race of artists and of patrons could return, unless there were to take place a great purification of the public mind, and a change in manners to correspond with such works and with such patronage. Were another Savanorola to arise, and to appear in the metropolis of modern civilization, it is much to be feared that we should not see philosophers and poets, artists of all kinds, sculptors, painters, and engravers, offering themselves with enthusiasm to him, to be the docile instruments of the social reform which he would propose to effect, as was witnessed in Florence, when the friar of St. Dominick preached penance. It was not till the fifteenth century that artists, and patrons of arts, began to exhibit a taste for the style and subjects of heathen antiquity, after which epoch, the Christian school of painting, banished from learned capitals, will be found in the monasteries on the Tuscan mountains, where, in the next book, we shall have occasion again to mention it.

The pagan taste has, in its turn, been superseded by a style, which consists in an attempt to follow mere unsanctified nature; so just is the remark of Rio, that, "the philosophy and manners of men are discernible from their works of art." The present school of painting therefore, derives inspiration from other sources besides purity of heart.

But this is ground from which I gladly turn as one who thinks every step lost until he regain his path.

CHAPTER IV.



WE have proceeded but a short distance on this pleasant way, which unfolds the human spirit purged from sinful blot in generations that are gone by, and we have already a glimpse at the marvellous reward conferred upon it; for evidence crowds in upon us from all sides, to illustrate how the blessed clean of heart, during ages of faith, were enabled, even in the present life, to attain in some degree to the vision in which it is declared their beatitude will everlastingly consist. "Mundus Deus," saith St. Jerome, "mundo corde conspicitur." Facts bore witness that he erred not. But what shall we say of the intellectual illumination consequent on such a vision? The light of Christ had kindled innumerable souls, which each in turn became instrumental to its diffusion throughout the nations. Truly the earth may be said to have rejoiced, irradiated with such brightness, and the whole world to have felt that it had lost darkness, before the light of the splendour of the eternal King. Well might Mother Church, adorned with the lustre of such beams, rejoice with the angelic crowd of heaven, and call upon her children at the wondrous splendour of this holy light to invoke with her the mercy of Almighty God. The ages which we have hitherto surveyed as bearing fruits of humility, meekness, mourning, justice, and mercy, must therefore now pass before us, in relation to that knowledge of truth which is implied in the vision of God; consequently, whatever forms part of their philosophic history must now be investigated.

The gift of understanding, according to St. Augustin, makes men possessors of the sixth beatitude. "The sixth operation of the Holy Spirit, which is intelligence, relates," saith he, "to the clean of heart, who, with a purified eye, can behold what eye hath not seen."* And the author of the *Moral Mirror*, ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, observes that men ought to be moved to seek purity of heart, because, acquiring or recovering it, they acquire or recover the

splendour of knowledge, according to what is written:—"Spiritus intelligentiæ mundus subtilis et quanto mundior tanto subtilior."* "Therefore," he continues, "it is said, blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God—at present by grace, in contemplation, and hereafter by glory, beholding him without veil, face to face."†

Indeed, from the beginning and all through the middle ages it had been shown that, as Savonarola says, even for advancement in human philosophy, and especially in metaphysics, cleanness of heart, which appeases all the passions of the mind, was indispensable.‡ The influence of moral purity upon the intellectual character of the ages involved in this history presents an immense field which might have furnished additional evidence in proof of the number of the clean of heart during the predominance of faith; but as it affords likewise all the requisite illustrations to explain the temporal fulfilment of the divine promise respecting the reward ordained for them, it will be best to change our line of argument, and henceforth, assuming that this purity existed, confine our view to its intellectual results. Nevertheless I would not pass on without remarking that we might have produced this additional store of evidence if it had been required, as every one conversant with antiquity will perceive; for that the philosophical history of these ages, and all the vast store of mystic literature connected with it, yields direct and incidental evidence of moral purity—the former in attesting the graces of eminent men, the latter in exhibiting results which, without cleanness of heart, could not have been obtained,—is a proposition which, I presume, need be only announced to be universally admitted.

Socrates inquires why the greatest number of the philosophers are perverse men: he does not make it a question whether they are or are not perverse;§ and, contrariwise, we might ask why not alone the greatest number, but all the eminent teachers of

* Sap. 7.

† Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. Lib. i. par. iv. dist. 21.

‡ Triumph Crucis, Lib. i. 13.

§ De Repub. Lib. vi.

* De Serm. Dom. in Monte.

Catholic philosophy were holy men. He tells of all who mentions one. Would you take examples? "A lover of justice and goodness, a foe to wickedness and malice, rather deservedly than accidentally styled Innocent," is the testimony of Gunther to the character of Pope Innocent III.*

"Thomas was an angel before he was the angelic doctor," says Labbæus, of the angel of the school.† "The most learned and most holy Thomas of Aquin," says Bishop Fisher, "I more willingly mention, because the impiety of Luther could not endure the sanctity of that man."‡

Alexander de Hales ascribes such innocence and purity to St. Bonaventura, that he says, "Adam does not seem to have sinned in Bonaventura." Staudenmaier remarks that "the acute and deep scholastics, as Erigena, Anselm of Canterbury, Hugo of St. Victor, Bonaventura, Thomas of Aquin, and others, were at the same time also high moral characters, pure, in harmony with nature, exhibiting the wonderful phenomenon of an interior Christian life." Again, a type of philosophers in those ages was Stephen Langton, as described by the old writers,—“A man illustrious in life and science—a man mighty in life, in renown, in science, and in learning.” Highly remarkable, too, are the very terms in which these witnesses convey their opinion of such men: as where Rainer, whom Pope Innocent III. sent to Spain, is described as “a man equally to be revered for science and for religion, for both most acceptable to God and to men;”§ and Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, on the accession of King John, as “a man of a profound breast, a pillar of stability to the realm, and of incomparable wisdom.”|| The reader must perceive at once that it would be quite useless to multiply testimonies of this kind, for when we have merely named any of the great luminaries of the school in the middle ages every one understands instinctively vessels of all grace; and if the admirable change which cleanness of heart had effected in the manners of the intellectually great and learned should not, at first sight, forcibly strike every reader, he may be assisted by reminding him of the testimony borne by a beloved disciple to the virtue of the wisest and best of the ancient philosophers, which yet amounted to no more than this: *Καὶ ὁ πάντων θαυμαστότατος, Σωκράτης μεθύοντα*

*οὐδὲν πώποτε ἰώρακεν ἀνθρώπων.** We shall soon, however, have occasion to observe that the teachers of truth in these ages expressly maintained the necessity of wishing, as St. Augustin says, to purify the soul in order to see truth—not of wishing to see truth in order to purify the soul.† They continually reminded each other, with St. Thomas, that, “they are styled salt before they are called light, by Truth, itself, because life is before doctrine, for life leads to the knowledge of truth.”‡ Their constant supplication was that which the holy Joseph of Copertino was heard to utter in his ecstasy, —“*Fiat Domine cor meum immaculatum, ut non confundar!*”§ Let us pass on, therefore, at once to view the happy spirits cleansed from sin on earth, in relation to intellectual good, to trace the influence of moral purity upon the philosophic character, and to receive the evidence in general which can be collected from the writings of these ages, in proof that the divine promise had even a temporal fulfilment. At the outset of this investigation we are presented with one of the many results exhibited in the intellectual history of the ages of faith, which indisputably, without purity of heart, could not have been obtained; for the first fact which forces itself upon our notice is the predominance of an intellectual as well as of a moral conscience. There is no closing of eyes to this fact, that during ages of faith the former reigned, if not uninterruptedly, at least to an unparalleled degree, so as to influence the whole public mind and constitution of all Christian nations. From whatever side we proceed to examine the truth of this statement, we shall find that it is solidly grounded and beyond refutation; for in the first place, the intense and devoted love of truth which influenced men is a fact that cannot be set aside. To the lowest member of a Catholic state, in ages of faith, as well as to the philosopher in the schools, and to the statesman of the type of Suger, in the court of princes, one might have applied the magnificent words of the Greek poet,—

Θάσσευς ἐν ἀψευδῇ θρόνῳ.||

Each one, from merely adhering to the church, and drinking from its living streams, became fixed and fruitful, and might be truly said to sit upon a throne, and as a presiding judge to have dominion such as no earthly power could overcome or bend.

* Gunther, Hist. Cptana IX. in Canisii Lect. Antiq. iv. † Inter Elog. P. Lab. 64.

‡ In Confut. Libri de Cap Babil.

§ Gesta Innoc. III.

|| Matt. Par. 138.

* Plat. Conviv. 35. + De Util. Cred.

† S. Thom. in c. 5. Matt.

§ Goerres Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 257.

|| Eurip. Iph. in Taur. 1242.

The constancy of the two Dominicans who chose to die with Savonarola rather than cease to render public testimony to his innocence, for they were charged with no other crime,* may be witnessed as an example; for if men were thus immovable, ready to die rather than not bear true witness for their neighbour, what could prevent them from bearing witness to the truth of that glorious vision of God, which embraced all things in one? Truth prevailed accordingly, and that is to say every thing; for I mean truth not scientific of curiosity, but moral and religious, of life and manners—truth mystic and holy, placing a curb upon the passions of men, annihilating their pride, prostrating selfishness, effecting all interests, determining all relations, directing all views—Catholic truth, joyous and blessed indeed to the clean of heart, but full of difficulties and inconveniences to the slaves of passion, that is to all men but those whom grace made pure. This return of multitudes to the understanding of their own honour is, after all, the grand pre-eminent event which has characterized the ages which we are considering; for how irreparably lost to such truth was the vast majority of the human race previous to their commencement! The most acute and practical of the ancient philosophers said, that "it was impossible to turn the multitude to understand the beautiful and good, since, living by passion," saith he, "they pursue their private pleasures, but they fly from suffering and grief, and they have no conception how truly sweet is the beautiful and good, for they have never tasted it. And what discourse could correct these? It is not possible, at least it is not easy, to change by discourse the things which have been transfused into the manners of men from old time."† "The parts of the philosophic nature," says Socrates, "are seldom born united in one and the same person, but in general they exist dispersed and separated; for men that have the talent of learning with facility, and the gift of memory, that have wit and penetration and the other qualities which are of a like nature, are seldom born with a disposition to generous and noble sentiments, with a desire to live decorously, orderly, in peace and steady fixedness of condition, *οἷα κοσμίως μετὰ ἡσυχίας καὶ βεβαιότητος ἐθελεῖν*‡; but such persons, by the quickness of their disposition, are carried away in whatever direction they happen to take, and

steady fixedness is totally foreign to them—*καὶ τὸ βέβαιον ἄνω ἐξ αὐτῶν οἴχεται*. How must this disorder of the heart pervert and obscure the judgment! On the other hand," he observes, "those who are of steady fixed manners, not easily changed, and in whom confidence can be placed, are but ill disposed for learning; for they are hard to be moved, and hard to be instructed, being, as it were, stupified with the touch of a torpedo, under the influence of sleep and yawning whenever they are obliged to do any thing; and we have shown that it is necessary to possess both these elements, or else never be qualified to fill any important office."*

This is a sad picture of the intellectual state of our nature; nor will it appear less deplorable, if examined with the eyes of men in ages of faith, for that will only serve to give a more aggravated idea of the depths from which it had to return when brought to the light of faith and to the purity of the clean of heart. Man, when he was in honour, did not understand, but fell to a similitude with beasts, "because," observes Vincent of Beauvais, "he swelled against truth, illuminating himself; he incurred infirmity, blindness, and all kinds of vanity: and therefore it is said, 'non intellexit'; because the father of lies favouring and suggesting, and iniquity lying to itself, man stood not in truth, but, closing his eyes to the light, remained in his blindness; thus pride impelling from himself and by himself, he is precipitated to the lowest depths, that is, to the things which delight cattle; and while he pours out all his entrails on the earth, all within himself disappears; and while breathing only after visible things, he is compared to silly beasts, though in comparison with beasts he is convicted of greater folly, and therefore to their school he is sent by the wise. 'Interroga jumenta,' says one of them, 'et docebunt te;' and another sends man negligent of salvation to the ant, that he may learn wisdom from her."† In fact it was a general observation, that from not cultivating religious feeling men gradually subside into mere animals, and that then the next step is to trample upon the pearls of the faith; so that, in consequence, after the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, one of the Papal nuncios, who was a Dominican, told the people in the Low Countries that of necessity they would all embrace the new opinions if they did not amend their lives.‡

* Plato de Repub. Lib. vi.

† Vincent Bellov. Speculum Doctrinale, Lib. i. c. 1.

‡ Tournon, iii. 20.

* Tournon, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 23.

† Aristotle, Ethic. Lib. x. cap. 9.

"In the lost children," saith Richard of St. Victor, "the light of the eyes faileth; for often, from the depravation of the will, the acuteness of the intelligence is clouded over. He who loses celestial desires, and involves himself in the love of earthly things, must incur the darkness of errors, and, as if from the distilled clouds of heaven, be tainted with a certain dew of seduction. The domination of vice by degrees softens the mind, and renders it constantly weaker and weaker."* And this, no doubt, explains the sentence of Simonides, that opinion violates truth:—*τὸ δοκεῖν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν βιάσεται*, which they should recollect who ever lay such stress upon what "seems;" for oh! what not in man deceivable and vain!

"All who are in mortal sin," says Dionysius the Carthusian, "are rebels to light, to the uncreated light, to the holy and true God, and to the judgment of right reason."† "Reason before sin," says Hugo of St. Victor, "comprehended more easily and perfectly what now with great difficulty and less perfectly, and from a distance, it can see; many things also it knew then, which now it doth not know."‡ Again, "Truth does not come willingly without goodness, or, if it come, it does not come from those parts and from that region where is salvation."§ "Of necessity, while the mind is corrupted within, the intelligence is deceived in the judgment of things without."|| "But where is charity, there is brightness: ubi caritas est, claritas est."¶

"Falsehood does not arise," says St. Augustin, "from the things themselves which deceive us, since they only show to the senses their exterior form, according to the beauty they have received; nor is it on the other hand, the senses which lead us into error, since being affected conformably to the nature of the body to which they belong, they bring only their own affections to the soul. It is sin which deceives souls, when they seek what is true, without that truth which they abandon."**

"Sin is partly in the intelligence," says the angelic doctor, "and therefore falsehood can be in the intelligence," which St. Augustin observes, remarking that "no one who

is deceived understands that in which he is deceived." St. Bernardine of Sienna traces the ignorance and errors of men to three sources, which are all excluded where the heart is pure. He cites the words, "*diminutæ sunt veritates a filiis hominum*;" and adds, "plurally—to denote a triple truth,—the truth of justice, which fails by avarice—the truth of life, which fails by luxury—and the truth of doctrine, which fails by pride."* Hence arises the phenomenon remarked by Paschal, that there are minds excellent in all other respects, which cannot in any manner consent to certain notions, though nothing can surpass them in clearness, and though, as Savonarola says of the Catholic doctrines in general, they admit of proof which amounts to mathematical demonstration.

These facts as to the origin of error convey an important testimony to the moral purity of those ages, in which the great truths of the Catholic religion were so generally admitted and acted upon, both by nations and individuals; and we shall find them multiplied and confirmed if we proceed to reflect upon the causes which, in subsequent times, have occasioned nations and individuals to lapse into a state of ignorance respecting the same truths, or to regard them with avowed hostility. The scholastic divines distinguish the *peccatum ignorantie* and the *peccatum ex ignorantie*.†

"There is a triple ignorance," says the Master of the Sentences: "that of those who are unwilling to know, which is itself sin—that of those who wish to know, but cannot; which ignorance excuses, for it is not sin, but only its punishment—and that of those who merely are ignorant, which is simple ignorance, which excuses no one fully, but only so far, perchance, as to mitigate punishment."‡ Of the first, St. Augustin speaks in these terms:—"Man with a perverse mind sometimes fears to understand, lest he should be compelled to do what he might understand;"§ which ignorance is noticed by the Psalmist, also, saying, "*Noluit intelligere ut bene ageret*."

In remarking that of this ignorance, in which clearly men of pure hearts could never be involved, we can discover comparatively but little trace during the middle ages, one must acknowledge that the genera-

* Ric. S. Victoris de Eruditione Hominis Interioris, i. ii. c. 26. 29.

† B. Dionysii Carthus. de Fonte Lucis, Præfat.

‡ Quæst. Circ. Epist. ad Rom. i. 269.

§ Hugo S. Vict. de Sacram. Lib. ii. p. 14. c. 9

|| Id. de Sapientia Anim. Christi, Præfat.

¶ De Sacram. Lib. ii. p. 13. c. 11.

•• S. August. de Ver. Rel. 67.

* S. Bern. Senens. Epist. 21. tom. iii.

† S. Bonavent. Declar. Termin. Theolog. op. tom. vi. p. 211.

‡ Mag. Sent. Lib. ii. Distinct. 22.

§ De Verbis Apostol. sect. 13.

tions of those times were exempt, in great measure, from the trials to which later have been exposed; for the Catholic religion was then in wondrous manner diffused, and provided with means of extending through all lands the knowledge of its truth; but when we come to speak of the ardour and affection with which that truth was explained, confirmed, and illustrated, we shall gather sufficient proof to convince us that, if by a mysterious permission of Almighty Providence, the pillar had been partially removed and the light of faith intercepted from any land, these were not the men who would have quietly resigned themselves to such a destitution, shut their eyes to the beams that might rekindle it, or taken refuge in ignorance, pretending it to be involuntary.

"Many things are unknown," says St. Bernard, "either through negligence to know or indolence to learn, or shame of inquiring," but according to St. Thomas, "ignorance, which is caused by a fault, cannot excuse the subsequent fault." As St. Augustin says, "it will not be imputed to you, as a fault, that you are ignorant; but that you neglect to seek that of which you are ignorant."* This is the terrible reproof to which the conduct of men, who refused to hear the holy church, has ever been obnoxious. The heathens evinced not more anxiety to learn what was really the Christian doctrine, than many of those who were separated from its authoritative teachers in latter times.

"*Hic solum humanam curiositatem torpescere*," says Tertullian, and the experience of eighteen centuries has only confirmed the truth of his observation. "Never speak of the Pythagoreans without light," was a Pythagorean maxim,† which might have suggested a reasonable caution to many eloquent declaimers in modern times, who could not be accused of neglecting to speak concerning that of which they were ignorant; for when truth had retired from some lands, bestruck with slanderous darts, many loved to speak of Catholics in the dark, without knowing any thing about them. Many, too, when the Catholic religion was explained to them, acted like that Trojan of the poet, who hearing the sentiments of the real Helen, supposing that it is only one who resembles her in person, exclaims, "your mind indeed is far different from hers. You have well said 'May the Gods reward you,' but may she, whom you resemble only in body, perish

miserably."* But let us hear more fully what the angelic Doctor says on this subject; "If ignorance made the involuntary, it would follow that all sin was involuntary, which is against St. Augustin, who says, 'that all sin is voluntary.' Ignorance," he continues, "is threefold in relation to the will, concomitantly, consequently, and antecedently: the first is where there is ignorance in an action, yet if there were knowledge the action would still be performed; such ignorance causes not the involuntary; the second case is where ignorance itself is voluntary, and this may be in two ways, as where the will chooses ignorance, that the guilt of sin may be diminished, and this is styled affected ignorance: the other manner is where a man can and ought to know, and this is the ignorance of evil choice, from passion or habit preceding; but when such ignorance exists it does not make an act involuntary. Antecedently is ignorance, in regard to the will, where it is the cause of doing what otherwise would not be done, and such ignorance causes the involuntary."† We must be reminded from time to time, that passages of this kind are valuable, not merely as conveying the opinion of illustrious philosophers, but as showing what was the universal conviction of mankind, constituting in reality historical facts; for to learn what was the general opinion of men in a particular age, or the state of the public mind respecting the causes and the guilt of indifference to truth, is to be made acquainted with a fact, and one too of no small importance to the success of a philosophic study of history.

That such should have been the conviction was, indeed, but a necessary consequence of moral purity, for what could be conceived more contrary to it, than a resolution to follow every inclination of nature blindly, in order to avoid the responsibility of knowing the Creator's will? "No excuse can be drawn from such ignorance," says Savonarola, who seems to deny that there can exist any other kind to prevent men from embracing the Catholic faith; for he says that, "whoever, although born in a land where it was unknown, should turn to God, with the natural light of reason and a pure heart, and implore him to show truth, his prayer would be heard; and either by an internal inspiration as to Job, or by angels as to Cornelius, or by an apostolic man as to the Eunuch by Philip, the necessary light would be imparted."‡

* De Libero Arbit. Lib. iii. 19.

† Iamblich. Adhort. ad Phil. in fin.

* Eurip. Helen. 160.

† S. Thom. Sum. p. I. Q. vi. art. 8.

‡ Triump. Crucis, Lib. ii. 16.

Of the great intellectual result, arising from the multitude of spirits purged from sin on earth, we should form however an inadequate idea, if we confined our observation to the general desire of escaping from a state of ignorance, without extending it to the positive proofs of fervour and sincerity with which truth was invited and received. But as these have been already witnessed during the course of the preceding books, in which we have seen the predominance of faith, and the devoted love with which the Catholic religion was embraced and practised, it will be more conducive to the end of exhibiting the happy consequences of attaining to the requisite qualification for this sixth beatitude, if we turn our attention, at present, to the causes which have occasioned the rejection or abandonment of the same truth, by those who ought to consider themselves as its natural defenders ; for by such contrasts effects are often clearer seen. And if it should be found that these are indeed the sharp parts of which I spoke, in the beginning, as inevitable, it must be remembered that, independent of the vital nourishment which may be drawn from them, the position of these persons is one that challenges inquiry ; for as one of their own body has lately said, "Men who appropriate to themselves a title which others claimed a right to enjoy, must expect their pretensions to be subjected to a somewhat rigid scrutiny ; nor are they even entitled to complain, if they incur a certain degree of obloquy and invective." Such we conceive to be the case as respects those who were pleased to assume to themselves the title of reformed Christians. Not indeed that I mean to bespeak a justification for myself, as if it were my intention to set down against them aught in malice, but, conceiving that their writings afford the most useful illustrations of the consequences which ensue from a want of that supernatural cleanness of heart, which eminently characterised Catholic generations in ages of faith, I must be permitted freely to make use of them for that purpose, not contrasting such men with ourselves, since, as far as regards nature, the result might cover us with shame, but comparing them with those we follow. Nor do I feel it necessary to disclaim an intention of charging all such persons with insincerity, since the denial would rather imply that I was conscious of having harboured the idea that such an intention was possible—a weakness, to use the gentlest term, from which I feel myself free.

That any man should write otherwise

than conscientiously,—I do not mean otherwise than what is generally implied by that term, for it is pretty evident that men on ordinary occasions, can find in their consciences exactly what they please,—but otherwise than they would write or dictate if laid on the bed of death, would be incredible if we were not surrounded with things, and if we did not find within ourselves at least the seeds of things incredible, though most true. Here unhappily we are not under the necessity of insisting much upon mere presumptions. The history of these divisions, which St. Paul classes among carnal sins, which records such a succession of vain men, pursuing the changing honours of the world as giddy children who run after butterflies, heedless of the ground beneath their feet, furnishes abundant proof, that an intellectual conscience is an indication of purity of heart, which mankind, in hostility to the Catholic church has never given.

"You must follow truth—*πάρεσσι καὶ πάντῃ*," says Plato, "or abandon all claim to the love of wisdom."* On that condition its adversaries have done, as yet, but little to swell the list of philosophers.

Antonio Galateus, a great Catholic Physician, makes a remark which was very characteristic of the spirit of the middle ages, when even the schools seemed to be animated with the generosity and courage of that chivalry, which was so much then in vogue, "Nor do I think it," he says, writing to Summonti, "a less sin not to assent to truth, than not to defend truth—in defence of which so many martyrs of Christ, so many prophets, so many philosophers are dead."†

This, I repeat it, was the spirit of that ancient society which was subject to the Catholic church. But if we turn to investigate the manners and spirit arising out of the civilization which succeeded, notwithstanding an increase of pretension, we shall find a very different state of things, yielding evidence on which it would be difficult not to believe, that a great revolution, in regard to such sentiments, had taken place. Without alluding to men resembling Strepsiades, whose sole desire really seemed to be to become masters of unjust reasoning, we find, as advocates of the new opinions very influential personages, in whom, unquestionably, a devotedness to truth was wanting,

* De Repub. Lib. vi.

† Ant. Gal. Callipolis descript. Thes. Antiq. Ital. tom. ix.

even when they did not regard it with hostility. Many adopted, in reference to Catholics, the policy of Seneca, who, as St. Augustin remarks, "never names the Christians, not daring to speak well of them lest he should contradict the common opinion of his country, and not wishing to speak ill of them lest he should wound his own conscience."* Perhaps, however, no class of men came forward in greater numbers, to swell the ranks of those who advocated the new philosophy in Europe, than that which was long before described by John of Salisbury. "Some there are," saith he, "who, as if imitators of the Academicians, choose from fancy rather than from reason what they follow. Whatever this man has caught up he thinks derived from the secret depths of philosophy. Prepared to contend for a tuft of wool, he thinks whatever sounds strange to his ears to be untenable. Whatever he himself advances is authentic and holy. When other men speak he contradicts them instantly, though he is oppressed with such intellectual poverty, that if you take from him one or two words he is dumb, and more silent than a statue: you would think him marble, and to have learned silence in a school of Pythagoras or a cloister of monks."† Men are not indeed to be censured for being poor, but if they attempt to deceive others by pretending riches, it is but right to put others on their guard against them.

St. Athanasius says, that the most decided of the Arian bishops did not dare to expose their real sentiments in Christian pulpits. "Cautious," he says, "in general men of the world, they speak only in a vague and general manner of the Son of God; and the Catholic people attach to this word a Catholic sense." St. Hilary makes the same remark, and adds, "This impious artifice of not saying what they think, is the cause why the bishops of Antichrist do not utterly destroy the Christian people, who take their expressions in the natural sense. They hear Jesus Christ called God, and they believe that he is what they call him. *Sanctiores aures populi quam corda sunt sacerdotum.*"‡

This passage might recall to the reader's mind other adversaries, and transport it to later times, when there were with the Christian sects, as there had been of old with the philosophers, the *βεβλῖα ἐξωρεμένα* and

the *λόγοι ἀκροαστικοί*, spoken of in Alexander's letter, as also the *ἐγκύκλιοι λόγοι*, of which the Stagyrte in his Ethics speaks. When an intelligent observer surveyed the fair professions which were opposed with such assurance to Catholicism, and discovered that after all they were never, for the most part, any thing but a greater or less degree of that unbelief which is now styled Rationalism, and that they owed many of their most distinguished ornaments to this contrivance, his only answer to their boastful advocates might have been in the poet's words,—"O heaven! that such resemblance of the truth should yet remain, where faith and reality remain not!" This contrast to the simplicity of the clean of heart can be discerned at an early stage of the revolution. Erasmus at first only objected to the violence of Luther. "I reserve myself," he says, writing to him, "wholly for the work of literature; and it seems to me that one is most likely to succeed by moderation. Thus it was that Christ acted and subdued the world; thus did Paul abolish the Judaic religion. *Omnia trahens ad allegoriam.*" Michelet remarks, that "as the Cæsars of old in their triumph had a voice to warn them, so had Luther in his day of glory; for in his joy he could discern the faint murmur of unbelief saying *memento mori*; and in fact Zuingle, notwithstanding the mystical style of his writings, was a decided herald of that troop." The same policy has been adopted in these latter days, even by a bolder race of spirits, who, after exhausting all the sophisms of their Gallic leader, in order to subdue the very name of Christ, have suddenly shifted sails and steered their bark to join the hosts of those who confine their hostility to Rome, who thoughtlessly admit the new allies, as if there could be no reason to suspect a belief which shows us men detesting Christ, who also detest Antichrist.

But, passing on, let us notice in our poor humanity, separated from the living sources in which it is made pure, other indications of an unsound double heart, which in the ages of faith were much more rarely found. Amidst these hosts were many who were sometimes forced by evidence to admit the motives of credibility, and yet who refused to believe. This was not a novelty, "*Pontifices et Pharisei,*" says St. Augustin, "*sibi consulebant, nec tamen dicebant, credamus.*"* "With such men," as Pelisson remarks, "the secret objection was so much the greater evil, as they

* De Civ. Dei, vi. 11.

† De Nugis Cur. Lib. vii. cap. 9

‡ S. Hilarii cont. Auxent. c. 6.

* Tract. xlix. in Joan,

never sought a remedy for it. They entered on no explanation, even within their own minds, but by a certain confused and undeveloped idea fancied themselves secure; but incredulity," adds this philosopher, "excuses no one before God, nor should it before men, until the question has been decided by a deep and mature deliberation of the grounds for believing or for not believing."* Their interior stains were manifest, therefore, by their neglecting to engage in such deliberations, notwithstanding the peculiarity of their position, which made them of absolute obligation. The words of Cotta to Velleus were applicable to them:—"Vestra solum legis; vestra amatis: cæteros causâ incognitâ condemnatis;"† so that one might address them in the style of Socrates, and say, alluding to the promises of which they are so bountiful, "O happy men of wondrous nature, who can accomplish such a work so easily! Your words indeed are admirable in many respects, but in this above all others transcendental,—that you make no account of many men who are venerable and esteemed not a little, but only of such as are like yourselves."‡ If, indeed, there be any book by Catholics inconsiderably written and condemned by authority, any extravagant legend, any base concession, like a traitorous deliverance of the towers of the celestial city,—that they read with greediness, and then laid claim to impartiality; but, as Cardan remarks, "It did not excuse Pilate when he said, 'Tui te mihi tradiderunt,' for he ought to have inquired into the truth, and discharged the office of a just judge." In the time of James I. the new teachers shunned any discussion with the old, though Walsingham says they used to boast that none appeared to argue with them, when in fact none were permitted.§ At present, undoubtedly, we hear of public disputations before a select audience, but it is only to remind one of the sophist Protagoras saying to Socrates, "It will be sweet to discourse concerning these things, in presence of these persons who are here with me;" when the sage perceived at once that his sole desire was to show off his abilities before Prodicus and Hippias, that is, to provide for gaining more money.|| How sweet is it for many thus, before chosen auditors, to hold up infidels and persecutors of the church,

like John of England, as representatives of its faith—how sweet to discourse concerning the baneful influence of Romanism, visible in men who in their hearts detested Rome, and were its bitterest enemies—how sweet to repeat all that Middleton and Robertson and others of that school have written, having the rich and credulous for hearers, who think their national glory must for ever set if there should be lack of contributions to the speaker's fund! Truly, when thus challenged, the Catholic should reply in the words of Æschylus, to one who said, "But you?—what do you wish to answer?"—

Ἐβουλόμην μὲν οὐκ ἐρίξω ἐνθάδε·
οὐκ ἐξ ἱσίου γὰρ ἴστω ἀγὼν νῦν.*

The wishing to discourse before a multitude of such men, he might continue, in the words of Plato, "seems to me as a thing justly reprehensible."† St. Augustin suggests the only rational method, saying, "Lay aside the study of parties, and seek the grace, not of conquering, but of finding truth.‡

A disingenuous use of erudition is a symptom of interior disease, from which the adversaries of the Catholic Church have at no time been wholly free. Chrysippus, the most cunning interpreter of the dreams of the stoics, as Cicero calls him, attempted, in the second book of his treatise, *De Natura Deorum*, to accommodate the fables of Orpheus, Musæus, Hesiod, and Homer to the things which he had laid down in the first concerning the gods,—ut etiam veterrimi poetæ, qui hæc ne suspicati quidem sint, Stoici fuisse videantur.§ One is forcibly reminded, by this passage, of the literary curiosities presented by modern writers, who show, with a great Prussian historian, St. Boniface protecting the Church of Germany from the tyranny of Rome, and with an English historian of the Anglo-Saxons, how early the corruptions of Rome began to infect the English Church—for by that admission he thinks to explain away the fact of its Catholicity—and with another distinguished writer of our country, Sir Thomas More, discoursing, like an Anglican minister, in a London clubhouse. Such is the learning, whether conveyed in a *Grandfather's Tales*, or in the more pre-

* Pelisson, *Réflexions sur les Differends de la Religion*, sect. iv. † *De Nat. Deorum*.

‡ Plato, *Euthydem.*

§ Search, &c. p. 2.

|| Plato, *Protag.*

* Rann. † Pato, *Euthydemus*.

‡ *De Mor. Manich.* c. 3. n. 5.

§ Cicero de *Nat. Deorum*, i. 15.

tentious volumes of a Family Library, which the watchmen of the reformed camp proclaim to be the one only cure for "the melancholy and dangerous spirit which leads the vast majority of their host to 'doubt whether they ought to convert Catholics or be converted themselves.'" That it is incompatible with purity of heart even to make choice of such representations as the best sources of information on the subject in debate, is an assertion which implies, I conceive, nothing uncharitable; for, as St. Augustin says, "What can be more full of temerity than to inquire concerning the sense of books from those who, in consequence of some secret impelling cause or other, have declared war against the writers and authors of those books?"*

If St. Theresa could say, "We do not live in times in which we can attach faith to all kinds of persons, but only to those who conform their lives to the life of Jesus Christ," no one in these days, assuredly, has any just ground to consider himself injured, if he should hear his contemporaries similarly admonished.

The prodigious power of prejudice, which so often reduces the best understandings to a level with the most imbecile, has been employed from the earliest times against the Catholic Church; and this must certainly be traced from the intricacies and defilements of the human heart. How could the judgment be the original offender here?

Truly it falleth out with these Catholic haters as with the good women spoken of by Sidney, who are often sick, but in faith they cannot tell where: so the name of Catholic or Roman is odious to them, though neither its cause nor effects, neither the sum that contains it nor the particularities descending from it, give any fast handle to their carping dispraise. This is an evil to which even the history of old philosophy shows that our nature has been always liable.

Socrates, in his Apology, expresses a greater fear of the ancient calumnious reports, which had been long propagated among the people respecting him, than of the specific charge brought against him by Anytus, however dreadful that might be. "These, O men!" he says, "are far more formidable, which have persuaded most of you from your childhood to believe these false charges against me,—such as that there was a certain Socrates, a sophist and

vain speculator, making the worst cause appear the best;—these reports, O Athenians! these reports are the accusers that I have most reason to dread. They are many in number, and they have long been actively employed against me, addressing themselves to you in that age when you were least able to refute them, being boys and youths; while there was no one to stand up in my defence. Therefore I have two sets of accusers—the one comprising these men who now bring a specific charge against me; the other, those who have long since been accusing me: and I am old and slow in speech, but my accusers are indefatigable and active through the energy of evil—*οἱ δ' ἐμὸι κατηγοροὶ ὅτε δεινὸν καὶ ὀφέλιον ὄντες ἐνδὲ τοῦ βάρβαρος τῆς κακίας.*"*

The contest between the Catholic Church and her adversaries could not be more faithfully described than in these words. Such are, in fact, the two sets of her accusers, both adopting courses that indicate the blot of sin in hearts not purged away. In general, their rule seems to be to accuse, without stopping to examine on what ground they accuse: so it pleaseth them to take things not conceded, and to make of them what they wish. Then we hear them cry out indignantly, saying, that every thing is contaminated with the demon's touch, and that what we treasure most is a curse to ourselves and to all other men; but 'tis they "who, lost in stormy visions, keep with phantoms an unprofitable strife, and in mad trance strike with their spirit's knife invulnerable nothings."

St. Augustin says, "that men being inclined to condemn whatever is contrary to the custom of their age and country, and to approve of nothing but what is according to it, it follows, that if any thing in the Scripture should be foreign to the custom of the hearers, they forthwith set that down as a figured locution. So, if the opinion of error should preoccupy the mind, whatever the Scripture may assert in contradiction to it is thought to be figurative.† But the Scripture," he adds, "prescribes only charity, and condemns only cupidity, and in that way forms the manners of men." Charity would thus correct the judgment. We are, therefore, again obliged to descend to the heart to find the seat of the evil. If there had been felt there the purifying influence of

* De Util. Cred. c. vi.

• Plato, Apol. 39.

† De Doct. Christ. Lib. iii. cap. 10.

love, men would not thus cling to the slightest obstacle and rest content, as we find so many do, with the force of such negative arguments as would never for an instant delay them in their temporal speculations. Thus, because St. Polycarp, writing upon other matters, does not mention that supremacy of Rome which his disciple, St. Iræneus, combating the heretics, speaks of as a thing unquestioned, therefore some conclude it cannot be proved as old as the apostolic age.

Every flimsy conceit of this kind is then received as a heaven-descended shield, which can be produced, they think, like that made by Vulcan, *φοβήμεναι ἐς φόβον ἀνδρῶν*: though, as Bossuet said of a reply by Claude, "It would be better to give no answer to us at all, than such an answer." On the other hand, in thus tracing prejudice to its source, it would be inhuman to press hard upon those afflicted with it, as if it were an evil not to be acquired without pains, when it is obviously the predominant malady of our common nature, which nothing can remove but the supernatural purity of heart, which confers beatitude. Above all, when it is promoted by the instructions of youth, there is ground for commiseration. On purely rational grounds no one has a right to expect argument to avail against the force of education and example; few can surmount such difficulties: "*Magni est ingenii revocare mentem a sensibus et cogitationem ab consuetudine abducere.*" As the poet saith, "Custom maketh blind and obdurate the loftiest hearts."

"Beware," said Socrates, to one who was about applying to Protagoras for lessons, "how you play at chances for the dearest interests belonging to you; for there is more danger in purchasing instruction than food or drink for the body. Food or drink purchased from the dealer can be tried before it enters your mouth, and you can determine what is to be eaten or drunk and what not, and how and where it should be received,—so here there is no danger; but lessons of instruction cannot be proved first by pouring them into a vessel, but having once received instructions into the soul, one must depart either injured or benefitted."*

There was, however, at the first, and there will continue to be to the end of time, an especial source of hostility to the Catholic religion, which indicates interior

impurity of a far deeper dye than that which leads to the dominion of ordinary prejudice. The influence of the passions and of the affections upon the judgment was so fully discerned by the ancient philosopher, that we are told his supplications to Heaven were limited to a prayer that he might be fair within; and in fact, where the heart is given not to God, but to creatures—where the habit is acquired of seeking exterior consolations, and of contracting attachments to things of earth, there can be no dependance upon the acutest intelligence. To the men who embraced the new opinions in the sixteenth century, might have been addressed the poet's admonition:—

"You have known better lights and guides than these:

Ah! let not aught amiss within dispose
A noble mind to practise on herself,
And tempt opinion to support the wrongs
Of passion —."

The moral restraints of the Catholic religion, and her correcting hand, are more than sufficient to shut out her truth from passion's slave, and him who still to worth has been a willing stranger. Mariana, speaking of Carilla, Archbishop of Toledo, who reprov'd Don Pedro the Cruel for his debaucheries, and who was hated by him on that account, says that his reasons for hating the archbishop were so much the stronger as they were unjust: *odii causæ acriores, quia iniquæ*.* The religion cannot be loved of which the minister incurs such hate from complying with its requisitions.

The great characteristics of men who oppose it on this ground are not those of Plato's philosopher, "a hatred of falsehood and a love of truth,"† but a hatred of what is not habitual and pleasing to them—of what is not associated with ideas that inspire self-esteem, and a love of what custom, domestic interests, and the innumerable bonds of the world have made dear to them. Such lovers of glory, as Plato would call them, are very angry if we only mention the name of authors who have written to prove the truth of the Catholic religion: "We feel no inclination to look into them," they say, with an expression of contempt,—nay, like Epicurus, they are ready to make war against dialectics, and deny the sense of the words, either yea or no, thinking to be acute too; though Cicero

* Plato, Protagoras.

* Lib. xvi. c. 18.

+ De Repub. Lib. vi.

asks, in allusion to such reasoners, "Quo quid dici potest obtusius?" 'Tis passion hangs these weights upon their tongue. But what is this, unless being angry with truth? And how stained must be the heart in which such aversion dwelleth!

Whoever attempts to recommend it must then expect to hear such words as Paris addressed to Antenor, "do not persist in saying to me that this creed is true, for it pleaseth me not."

—σὺ μὲν οὐκ ἐν' ἔμοι φίλα ταῦτ' ἀγορεύεις·
 ὁσθα καὶ ἄλλον μῦθον ἀμείνονα τοῦδε νοῆσαι.*

Indeed, if you will hear men, of deep mysterious vision into the secrets of the spiritual world, you will be inclined to think that the implacable hatred, which some in different ages have evinced against this holy cause, could only be accounted for by tracing it to a certain instinct, which tells them, as St. Anselm says, "that the consummation of the saints will be to such as perish interminable grief and everlasting ruin." Doubtless, ancient poets say with more truth than is often imagined, "that the crimes of ancestors cause men to experience the enmity of the avenging ministers of Heaven." How else can one explain the language that now finds favour among men of noble descent, and in every other respect, of gentle manners? 'tis like the drops from the heart of the Furies bearing death to mortals. Who will appease the bitter strength of the black wave? But every where the mists are gathering between truth, and all but the clean of heart. Where nations have been separated, the very affections of nature interpose, as they did in the first age of the Church. St. Clement of Alexandria met the difficulty in this manner. You say "it is not well and honourable to turn aside from the custom of our fathers. Why, then," he adds, "do you not continue to use the nurse's milk to which they first accustomed you? why do you increase or diminish the substance they left you? If they left you an evil and Atheistic custom of life, why should you not seek the truth, and your real true Father?† Where the heart is not purified by humility, wisdom herself becomes an obstacle, and men conclude that their position without the Church, verifies the maxim of Cardan, that it is sometimes better to persist in a bad choice than afterwards to vary one's course by

choosing a better.* Though Homer would suffice to convict them of error in following it, since he makes a heavenly tongue declare, that the minds of the good can be converted; *σπρηντα μὲν τε φρένας ἐσθλῶν.*†

Nor is this all; for the mind is blinded to the light of truth, oftener, perhaps, by regarding the dazzling brightness of its own virtues, than by involving itself in the clouds of vice. Men of the best and sweetest natures engage in holy offices of charity and instruction, in emulation of what they read in Catholic books, and the very zeal and energy with which they pursue them, may, unknown to themselves, be in exact proportion to the depth of the secret wound, which the fiery dart of truth may have inflicted on their conscience, at some former period of their lives, and they remember it not. It is sad to return to treat grosser and more vulgar stains, but one cannot overlook the instance remarked by our own poet, where he says, that "gold is poison to men's souls, doing more murders in this loathsome world." This, beyond all doubt, it is, which often clouds the brow, whenever the serene light of truth is perceived breaking in from a distance. When the interior blot remains untouched, it avails but little to remind men of their soul. "Riches are a soul to wretched mortals," said the oldest poet of the Greeks.‡ Hence the fog doth often rise to vitiate the spirit's beam; this the holy Bernard knew, and therefore he writes in these terms to Gillebert, Bishop of London, commending his spirit of poverty. Avarice is dead; to whom is not such a word sweet? How truly wise must you be who have destroyed the greatest enemy of wisdom? Truly this is worthy of your priesthood, and of your name. It was right that you should confirm your eminent philosophy by this testimony, to furnish this compliment to your long studies. It was not a great thing for Master Gillebert to become a Bishop; but for a Bishop of London to live like a poor man, this is clearly magnificent.§ We read in the life of St. John Climacus, that he not being held by affection for any thing mortal, but nourished only by the sense of eternal things, escaped free from noxious sadness. Pride, ambition, and the love of pleasure, are the chief sources of intellectual blindness, so that Christ struck at the root of the cursed

* De Vita propria, Lib. l. c. xi.

† Il. XV. 213.

‡ Hesiod, Op. et Dies.

§ S. Bernardi Epist. xxiv.

• Il. VII. 357.

+ Protrepticus, c. x.

tree of false knowledge, when he said, "siquis vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum et tollat crucem suam." Witness those lovers of pleasure, of whom St. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks. "Let them take up their cross," he says, "and they will cease to be Atheists under the name of philosophers."*

Only let this divine precept be obeyed; and no class of men, in order to win the world's praise, or led away by a love of singularity, to forsake the Catholic form of sound words, will be heard, uttering crude and unauthorized fancies, recklessly scattering the seeds of presumptuousness and delusion: men, who, as far as their meaning can be distinguished from that of Catholic divines and moralists, hold nothing peculiar to themselves, on the great doctrines of redemption, unless, indeed, they hold what is absurd and pestilential, will not then pretend to be the reformed, or the sole depositories of evangelical truth: but, on the contrary, every tongue will repeat St. Augustin's words, "there can be no just necessity for breaking unity:" then we shall hear no more of professed teachers of truth, coming with deep premeditated lines, with written pamphlets, studiously devised to accuse any set of men in mass, without hearing them, without studying the cause of their position in society, or knowing what are their sentiments, and defaming them by categories, extolling the wisdom and the institutions of the ancient Catholic society, and with the same breath denouncing those who follow that wisdom, and who would perpetuate those institutions, in their true spirit, as a perfidious faction, which must be either converted to the modern creed, or conquered with the sword; turning the sails of their speech thus to every wind, after the manner of Jewell, and those other counsellors, whose arts detected, caused the first doubts to Francis Walsingham,—at one time dogmatising and bearing testimony against the Church, like that which the Jews bore against her Divine Founder, which did not agree together: hoping to convict of crime that Church which Truth itself declared, should be purified so as to have neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, at another adopting the style of the Academicians, who doubt of all things, and know nothing, demanding, what is truth? Where is truth between these opinions?

St. Bernard does not treat this wound

* Stomat. Lib. i. c. 11.

without applying the knife deeply. "Why, O Pilate," he exclaims, "dost thou interrogate the Lord aside, that he should whisper to thee what is truth? Does it concern thee? That which is holy must not be cast to dogs. Seek rather to taste faith, but ask not in the interim for what satiates the intelligence."* This indeed is stern language, but, on the whole, such a complaint, and even such a prayer from men who seek not things, but the search of things, not the truth but the examination, deserve no other answer. As for the declaration, that they cannot return to the house of unity, such a defence involves too many contradictions to be of the least avail.

"Philosophy," says Novalis, "is wholly depending on the will. What I will, that I can."

But to others, who ask for truth with humility and sincerity, the constant reply of the Catholic church might have been expressed in the verse of Sophocles:

——— τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον
ἀλωτὸν ἐκφέρει δὲ τὰ μελούμενον.†

for within the range, of necessary truths, one may truly say with the Roman poet, "Nihil tam difficile est quin querendo investigari possit."

As for that opinion, ascribed by Varro to the new Academics, that all things are uncertain, "The city of God," saith St. Augustin, "detests such a doubt as madness, for however its soul may be oppressed by the body, so that it can only know in part, yet of the things which it comprehends in mind and reason, it has a most certain knowledge."‡

Yes assuredly the teachers of the ancient wisdom would say, if they could observe what now takes place on earth, "Let men restore the old roodloft of their churches, with a view to its symbolic sense, and we shall soon hear that the adorable sacrifice of the mass is again offered upon their altars. Only let them take up their Redeemer's cross in practice, and every thing will return to its pristine beauty. For after all, the best answer that could be given to their objections, by one who loved the men, and horribly spotted is the heart which loveth them not, would be to show them a crucifix. The deep scholastics

* De divers. Serm. xv.

† Æd. Tyr. 110.

‡ De Civ. Dei, Lib. xix. 18.

would adduce it as their most forcible, most subtle, most profound argument : for what, they would ask, can resist the speechless lesson contained in this great symbol of the whole Catholic doctrine? Come, methinks I hear them say, let us hear why they remain aloof from us. What do they think of the judgment of this world?—Show them the crucifix. What of penance and mortification?—Show them the crucifix. What of riches and advancement, and a life devoted to subtle ambition?—Show them the crucifix. What of the wisdom of this world?—Show them the crucifix. What of obedience, involving the submission of their own will to the unsearchable commands of Almighty God?—Show them the crucifix. What of the pride which leads them perhaps to justify, under the cloak of a more evangelical religion, their own absurd and dangerous depreciation of morality, and to neglect the duty of humility, and gentleness, and patience, under insult and injury, and all the rude buffetings of the world?—Show them the crucifix. Yet, what in the days of Scot and Thomas could hardly be conceived, is there something that can resist even this. Need I add, that it is the heart in which the modern philosophy, under any form or title, can have sway. There it will fail; for, as a deep observer has remarked, one who, through a long life, has watched it narrowly, that “philosophy, and I know not what habit it may not sometimes assume, is vain in its thoughts and proud in its discourse. It has the pride of the Stoics, and the license of Epicurus; it has its sceptics, its Pyrrhoniens, its eclectics; and the only doctrine which it has not embraced is that of privation.”*

If the judgment of those who delivered over the deposit of faith to the disputations of men, had been really unshackled, the error would not have lasted a single day. Had those who came after them been content to begin with doubts, as they were bound to do by their own principles, they would not have been slow to end in certainties; for the ingenuity of truth is such, that, where she gets a free and willing hand, she opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her. Remark the complaints of Milton, “of the unavoidable dangers of unlimited controversial reading,” where he says, “how many of our priests and doctors

have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists, and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad,”* a complaint repeated lately by one invested with such authority as the Anglican opinions could confer, who affectionately recommended a disciple to cease from examining the books of Catholics alleging for reason, that he had never known any one to indulge in such curiosity who did not end by adopting their creed.

And here I would remark that a great advantage of studying the works of Plato, consists in the facility which it gives of detecting the intricate windings of the passions, and of dissolving the complicated ties in which they shroud the understanding. All men are sophists with the exception of the clean of heart, and many who with subtlety attack sophists, are themselves but of their college; and it is well to have this fact attested and explained by so clear and unimpeachable a witness. Nevertheless, without having read Plato, the instinct of the holy race would often detect fallacies, where the understanding of the prudent might otherwise have been imposed upon, proving itself a still more secure guide in speculation, as well as in life and manners; for we find, as Cardan remarks, “that with many men, there is nothing so vile or flagitious, which will not admit of defence or palliation.”† Socrates has to oppose a sophist, who can prove, by clear and admirable reasoning, that he may and should pursue his own father before a court of justice,‡ and clearly the instinct above mentioned, is not predominant among those who demonstrate the wisdom and necessity of resisting the church their mother, or congenial with that muse which falls into extacy, as Gilbert says, at the bare sound of unmasking priests, styling vain, ambitious, and absurd, what the holy and the pure call virtue.

It is a just remark of Quintilian, “that it is as much easier to accuse than to defend, as it is to inflict than to cure a wound;”§ but if men perish through the seductions of iniquity, it is because their hearts, by sin, were wounded, and with the dulcet charity of truth had not been made whole.

One may observe too, that truth was

* Of Unlicensed Printing.

† Cardani de Sapiaentia, Lib. v.

‡ Plat. Euthryphro.

§ Lib. v. 13.

• Bonald.

sometimes on the tongue, without enabling any one to conclude from it that the heart had been made supernaturally clean. Thus, for instance, truth was sometimes on the lips of men who sought to possess themselves of what they envied in the Catholic church, by means which they quaintly termed underpinning the people's faith: but it was evident that the fountain of truth was not the sole source from which they drew inspiration, since they were contradicting themselves at almost every word. Indeed, to Catholic ears, their resolution to imitate what they termed the policy of Rome, with the parenthetical comment that it is undoubtedly successful, sounded like nothing but the language ascribed to the father of lies, in the old legends, which represent the demon, in order to ensnare more souls, mimicking the church of God. Truth was often heard announced by men, who attacked Catholics, using against them their own arguments ready provided, adopting in their polemics the policy of Gylippus, that famous general of Sparta who, in building the wall that was to effect the deliverance of Syracuse, made use of the very stones which the Athenians had prepared to secure its capture and destruction.*

Oh how wisely and beautifully do eloquent men discourse, when truth and their own interest or affection may be conjoined, without any material or intellectual sacrifice on their part! How every thing is then represented in its natural light, yea with what exact and subtle penetration are all the exquisite harmonies of the Catholic philosophy developed. What doctor of the church could write better on justice, order, unity, obedience, gratitude, prudence? Nothing is wanting. You have a distinct recognition of the duty of adhering to the object and specific terms of original charters, and to the real particular intention of founders—and of respecting the oaths constructed by them. You have a demonstration of the value of incorporations—the recognition of their rights, duties, and personality—of the necessity of authority in matters of faith—of revering the wisdom of past ages—of the character of the church, as intended to guard and transmit a certain deposit of truths. You have even a recognition that the principle of private masses in Catholic worship, was holy and divine. But what skills it to speak catholically, if men do not speak consistently?—To talk of fulfilling to the letter the ob-

ject of founders, when, if they were to do so, they would have to resign all that they possess? Who can be moved at their complaint of the decay of humility and obedience, when he knows that if they had ever evinced one or the other, their system would have been, from that moment, at an end? Where is the advantage from now saying, yes, yes, when they began by a climax of negations?—saying no, first to their brethren, then to their rulers, then to the pastors of the church, then, when he condemned them, to Christ's vicar? Of what avail, in short, are all the truths they utter, all these wise Catholic axioms so fluent on their lips, unless to convey the solemn condemnation of their own system from its infancy? As philosophers, at least, they cannot come forward without unpardonable effrontery; for every system in general, whatever be its nature, must follow its own principles, good or bad; otherwise no one should condescend to listen to it, since it destroys itself, as a syllogism which would deny in the conclusion what it had established in the first or second proposition. This single consideration may convert, in an instant, the most beautiful compositions into a tissue of absurdity. In support of the new systems, men were sent forth more ingenious and powerful than Dædalus, who, as Socrates would say, could make their ideas not only move, but even describe a circle.* But such skill belonged not to the clean of heart.

Surely there must have been something very wrong in the interior, when minds could acquiesce in the most contradictory propositions, and suppose that it was an enlightened and reformed state of Christian belief to adopt a system like that Academic philosophy which embraced all the most opposite opinions, and which Cicero, therefore, calls the philosophy *ἡ διὰ κἀνα*. One cannot observe the aspect of literature at the present day without being converted to Plato's opinion, that "the soul to pursue philosophy, must of necessity possess not alone memory, the ability to learn, grandeur, elegance, and grace, but also the love of truth and a certain affinity to truth, as well as a love of justice, courage, and temperance."†

The experience of the schools continues to prove that from the study of philosophy by degraded natures there can be, as he

* Thucyd. Lib. vii. 5.

• Plato, Euthyphr.

† De Repub. Lib. vi.

says, nothing good expected. "When minds unworthy of instruction apply to it, what thoughts and opinions," he asks, "do you suppose will proceed from them? Will they not be sophisms, and whatever is opposed to legitimate conclusions, and unworthy of those who possess true wisdom?"* The holy fathers and the schoolmen never supposed that truth was unconcerned with ethics, and that the intelligence could succeed while the heart was without discipline. They only say, "Easily does the holy and divine consort with what is related to it in the soul, and through a certain familiar light does the mystic ray descend upon man."† "To those alone who seek the truth through love does the light shine."‡

All perturbations of mind are called diseases by the ancient philosophers, who teach that soundness of mind consists in a certain tranquillity and constancy;§ and where this tranquillity and constancy, this love of truth and justice, are not found, it is in vain that truth be even found. Then, as St. Ambrose saith, "men are quick to superstitions, but slow to things divine; they have eyes, and see not; they move in darkness; while they think that they fly with subtle words, they are only disturbed like bats at the splendour of true light."||

Little boots it to bring arguments to men like Swift, who insult the faith of Catholics after the manner of Dionysius, adding impious jests to robbery and sacrilege. As Michelet observes, both Eck and Cochleus were men of great ability; but what could their talents avail against the ridicule of Luther, who smote the Church and derided her, like those who struck her Divine Founder on the face, saying, *Prophetiza nobis, Christe, quis est qui te percussit?* Ridicule was in the order of that day. What, said the prudent, can be expected from the logic of the clean of heart, at a time when twenty thousand copies of the mocking colloquies of Erasmus (who, by the way, was the Voltaire of the sixteenth century) are sold in twelve hours? It is for them to be silent while the laugh goes round, for which the world ere long a world of tears must weep.

It is not, surely, a breach of charity to affirm, that if the adversaries of the Church had been in the number of the clean of heart, they would not have fought against

her with rumours, rushing forwards with a Trojan clamour resembling the cry of birds when she demanded reasons from them; their discourse would not always have steered clear of certain topics, passing on one side, and involving itself in obscurity, in order not to move and meet fairly certain questions, as Socrates says, *παρεξίοντος καὶ παρακαλυπτομένου τοῦ λόγου, πεφοβημένου κινεῖν τὸ νῦν παρόν*. They would not have sought to escape from those who asked them to give a reason of their innovations, by riding over them, as Æschylus says, as if with a furious horse, crying out popery, like the giant, which Dante saw in hell, that shouted *Baï ameth sabi almi*—no sweeter hymns becoming his fierce lips. Above all, such wrath would be far from the noble mind, and never would it have been witnessed on the tongue of such men as Milton, where notwithstanding, whenever the name of Catholic occurs, it is invariably found, indicating assuredly some terrible disorder at the core; for a consciousness of truth, even in the vulgar heart, produces a great calm. They would not have assumed the privilege of grammarians (and what Cardan says is only allowable in their contests), have inveighed against others with rustic insolence, and indulged in personal invective. Such, however is the constant phenomenon presented in this contest, in which men of vast intelligence, not profiting by the grace of God to embrace the Catholic religion, are seen lashed into a fury against that which they know must be the truth. In short, they would not have shown so much regard to these hereditary imputations, of which, as Johnson says, "No man sees the justice till it becomes his interest to see it; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit than ability to prove them." Impressions of such a nature would never have gained admittance where clouds had not risen from within to shroud in darkness the understanding. Men whose hearts were pure would have attended to the cautions so repeatedly given by the old teachers, to beware of deceiving an opponent with dialectic syllogisms and the sophisms of false conclusions.* They would not have been content with *ex parte* statements for a foundation, but would have said with Minerva in the Eumenides,—

* De Repub. vi.

† S. Clem. Stromat. Lib. vii.

‡ Id. Lib. vi. 15. § Cicero, Tusc. lii. 9.

|| S. Amb. Serm. XLIII.

* Isidori Etymolog. Lib. ii. 7.

Δουὶν παρόντων, ἡμῖνος λόγος πάρα*

Truly, in affirming that it is otherwise with them, I speak not without having had means of observation. I have read many eloquent, and, if you will, masterly and "adamantine" treatises, composed with a view to prove the truth of the new opinions in religion; but I could never bear a higher testimony to any one of them than that which is given by Cicero respecting the speech of Lucullus: "*Me oratio Luculli de ipsa re ita movit, ut docti hominis, et copiosi, et parati, et nihil prætereuntis eorum quæ pro illa causa dici possent; non tamen ut ei respondere posse diffiderem.*"

To talk of answering them, however, generally speaking, argued but little experience or but slight discernment. Ages have only, in succession, verified the truth of what St. Clement of Alexandria says, that "all heresy at the beginning has ears to hear not what is proper for it to hear, but only such things as minister to pleasure."† The words of the Roman philosopher seem as if they had been expressly written to describe those who profess it: "I know not in what manner the majority of them would rather err and defend with pugnacity the opinions which they love, than receive without obstinacy what may be consistently advanced."‡

At the epoch of the great religious revolution, it was well known that the majority of printers and booksellers were determined to favour Luther. They printed the Catholic replies so barbarously that it was difficult to read them, while of the Lutheran they gave beautiful editions. The booksellers too spared no pains to facilitate the sale of each new pamphlet, directed against the Church, and at the same time, threw every difficulty in the way of propagating those written in its defence. Clearly such arts were arguments of weakness, and gave proof of no advance in that freedom of opinion, which springs from purity of heart, though intellectual emancipation was emblazoned on the new banners. To liberators of this kind, the defenders of truth might have replied. These after all are not your opinions; it is not you that are interested for, as St. Augustin says, "what is so little yours as yourself, if it depend on another, that you are what you are?" "quid tam non tuum quam tu si alicujus est quod es?"§ for, in short, to hasten from this cruel spectacle, was it not a fact visible to

every one, who was not deliberately blind, that the innovators in a few instances were masters of their own opinions? What so little belonging to them as their own intelligence? The judgment of one belongs to a king, whose ruling passion it is to compose a new religion for his subjects, with as close adherence to antiquity as is possible without divine faith and submission to the Holy See; that of another depends upon a circle of learned and acute men. Many belong wholly to their friends and relations, and some to all the world; for what liberty has the poor intelligence, when the only beatitude which the heart desires, is the ability to say with Creon,

νῦν πᾶσι χαίρω, νῦν με πᾶς ἀσπάζεται.*

To have treated therefore with discretion persons separated from Catholic unity, the first question should have been that which Truth itself proposed, "*quem quæritis?*" The point to determine was, not what they believed (the majority were ready to believe any thing), but what they loved; consequently it was unnecessary to inquire respecting what they had read or seen, for they might have read every thing and seen every thing, without being the better qualified to assist at a free discussion. The first, and indeed sole object of investigation should have been the state of the heart; if that were not clean, the intelligence was not free, and it was useless to proceed. They more needed the divine than the logician: the latter could do nothing, "*nihil enim facile persuadetur invitis.*"†

When a man of faith beheld the contest of those who wanted that light—contest deplorable, and without even human glory, reminding him of the Homeric lines:

ἐνθα δ' ἄμ' οἰμαγῇ τε καὶ εὐχολῇ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν,
δλλύντων τε καὶ δλλυμένων.‡

Though he were ever such a skilled antagonist, he naturally and justly expressed reluctance to engage in it; but such sentiments in him arose not from distrust, for he might have used the great Dante's words, and said,

"— The anguish of that race below,
With pity stains my cheek,
Which thou for fear mistakest."

But the prospects of success were different

* 428

† Lucullus.

+ Stromat. Lib. vii. c. 16.

§ 1 Tract. 29, in Joan.

* Soph. Œd. Tyr. 595.

† Quintil. Lib. iv. 3.

‡ Il. VIII. 64.

when other assistance was called in ; for it was impossible to say what might not result from hearing the divine, meek and persuasive, who had made the purification of human hearts his study, when, in the manner prescribed by Richard, of St. Victor, he would say, "whatever you desire in the world, whatever in it you fear to lose, give it up willingly, for freedom of heart. Having bought a field, dig deep, as those who search for a treasure : but, alas ! whence shall I get this gold and silver ? to dig I am not able ; to beg, I am ashamed. I know what I will do. I will go to my Father, the Father of mercies, from whom is every good and perfect gift, who gives to all abundantly and spareth not. I will pour forth my prayer in his sight, and I will disclose my poverty before him, and I will say to him, Lord, thou knowest my folly, and my substance is as nothing before thee. Grant me understanding that I may have the gold of true riches."*

Socrates, after showing the error of certain men, who pretended to superior wisdom, who being in the third degree removed from truth, sought to be regarded as first, concludes with this reflection, "nevertheless, we must forgive them for having this pretension, and not reprove them," for we should love every man who says, "that he makes any account of wisdom, and manfully exerts himself to obtain it."† Such was the conclusion to which Catholic philosophers came, when they had been obliged to institute investigations of this painful nature ; they made them, with hurried step, as passing through a sad but necessary ordeal, and hastened on to show with St. Bonaventura, "to those who loved wisdom, and who exerted themselves to obtain it." How by the gift of piety, the spiritual day which disperses before it all these clouds and deceitful shadows proceeds, and is consummated in the world of the soul.

The ancient philosophers discerned the need of some fresh illumination to dispel the darkness of human hearts, and Plato proceeds on one occasion to show, in what manner any one might lead men, so involved, to light ? "as some," he says, "are reported to have been conducted from Hades to the gods ; which," he adds, "would be not by the turning round of a shell, as in the vote by ostracism ; but by turning round the soul from a nocturnal state to the true returning road of reality, which is that of philosophy." "Therefore," he concludes,

* Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. 1. Lib. iii. c. 5. + Euthydemus.

"we must seek what kind of learning has this power, or what is the instruction which can draw the soul from what is generated to what has existence in itself ;" ἀπὸ τοῦ γυγνομένου ἐπὶ τὸ ὄν.* These intellectual obscurities were not identified by the philosophers of the ages of faith, with any particular position in regard to truth ; for they knew that more or less they encompass all men who are not divinely drawn within the radiance of its everlasting beams.

In all studies, not alone divine, but human and secular, the teachers of Catholic wisdom acknowledged two great luminaries to enlighten the intelligence,—the greater the love of God, and the less the love of their neighbour.† "The light of his countenance," says Hugo, of St. Victor, "is signed upon us all by nature, which is common to all ; but joy is given to the heart of individuals by grace, which is imparted to us one by one.‡

"Since the rising of the corporal sun upon the earth makes corporal day, during which men have to labour in their corporal works, for the necessities of the body, how much more," saith Bonaventura, "must the presence of the eternal sun, the Holy Ghost, cause a spiritual day in the human soul, in which all spiritual works must be accomplished for the relief of spiritual wants." It is to be observed also, that as in the external day, there are three hours distinguished—the morning, noon, and evening ; so in the spiritual day of piety there are three hours distinguished : the morning, which is the beginning of piety shining upon its own subject ; the noon, which is the fervour of piety shining to the divine worship ; and the evening, which is the inclination of piety to our neighbour.

At first, therefore, the gift of piety shining from the eternal sun, like a certain dawn and commencement of spiritual light, begins the day in the soul. "Pie agentibus dabit Dominus sapientiam," as it is said in Ecclesiasticus, "and wisdom is the inextinguishable light of piety ; and the more that piety is exercised, the more will the light of wisdom be given, till it increases to the perfect day." Similarly the work of impiety diminishes the light of piety in the mind, and produces darkness. Whence it is said in the Proverbs, "the path of the just is as the shining light which proceeds and increases to the perfect day." The gift of piety in

* De Repub. vii.

† Ermenrich Monach. Angiensis de Grammatica, apud Mabil. vet. Analect. 420.

‡ Annot. Elucid. in Ps. c. 5.

this its first hour inclines man to have compassion upon himself, and makes him consider how miserable will be his soul if it should be separated from God. From which inspiration the mind is illuminated, and then the gift of piety shines in the soul without a cloud, as the light of morning, like the early sun illuminating the east. Thence the gift of piety proceeds, and makes the noontide of spiritual day in the soul, inclining man to offer, both internal and external worship to God, as the principle of his creation, and the end of his beatitude, both by interior and exterior operations, and then there is a meridian light in the human soul shining without clouds. Lastly, the gift of piety in the soul terminates the spiritual day, when it inclines the mind to have compassion upon others; for in the work of charity it is consummated, or otherwise it has been observed, that the knowledge of creatures is but an evening light when compared with that light of piety, which inclines the soul to adore God; for to incline to anything but to him, unless it be on account of him, is not the leisure of Mary, but the

occupation of Martha, "who was troubled about many things, while only one was necessary."*

From this point the way before us, though far, lies open to the end of the present book; for henceforth we have only to remark the distinguishing characteristic of the Catholic generations in ages of faith in relation to wisdom, to show how they valued it, and confirm our statement by a rapid glance at the series of historic personages connected with the school—to observe what was their method of philosophy—in what they made it consist—in what light they regarded the wisdom of the ancients—what were the prominent features of their own philosophy—and what were the advantages resulting to it from their position in regard to the Church. Finally, we have to inquire, in what manner the divine promise was fulfilled in them, and in what sense it was true that they, while living upon earth, beheld God? This task which remains, is indeed arduous, but let us advance with courage; for, as Plato saith, "dispirited men have never raised aught that could endure."

CHAPTER V.

THAT men, in ages of faith, loved and cultivated wisdom, might easily be demonstrated from the very accusations brought against them by the sophists of later times; for the facts which gave these writers most offence, the acknowledgment of the ecclesiastical authority, the submission of the people to their clergy, prove that wisdom was the first thing in their estimation; since otherwise, an idea would not have been stronger than force material, nor would he, who commanded intelligence, have been able to retain his dominion, though in exile or in chains.

"During the middle ages," as a late profound historian remarks, "through all life predominated the word of the Founder of the Church, that his kingdom is not of this world; but through that very knowledge the Church attained to its supreme power over all Europe; and never was it so energetically displayed, as when the Holy See

was attacked with most violence, whether by princes or people."† Socrates said, "that there are three races of men—the philosophic, or that of men loving wisdom; the ambitious, or those loving contention and glory; and the covetous, comprising all who love gain: and, he added, that there are three kinds of pleasure corresponding to these."‡ Without doubt, this threefold division of humanity might have been traced in the ages which we are surveying, as well as in all other periods of the world. The clean of heart at that time discerned and deplored it—"O, how often do we seek truth itself," exclaims Richard of St. Victor, "not for truth sake, but for vanity; and having found truth, love it, not in truth, but through vanity; and what is most miserable, we trade with the words of life for the gain of death."§ Hugo, of St. Victor, no less re-

* S. Bonavent. de Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti, cap. 11. † Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. 425.

‡ Plato de Repub. Lib. ix.

§ De Erudit. Hom. Inter. Lib. i. c. 3.

cognised it: "I see many studious," he says, "but few religious. They love reading, not religion; nay, from the love of reading they contract a hatred for religion, wishing to have the chief seats, and receive salutations from the people as great doctors;"* you can trace, therefore, still the ambitious and the covetous tribe. But the extraordinary extension and predominance of the race loving wisdom, during the ages of faith, is a fact which no historian has been able to pass by unnoticed, though the majority of later writers have systematically perverted and misrepresented it.

"Ignorance is an atrophy of the soul; but knowledge it is food:†" so speaks the early Church, through the mouth of St. Clement of Alexandria, and the same judgment of the Catholic society is pronounced in the middle ages by St. Bonaventura, commenting upon the words of the Apostle, "it is your reasonable service;" for he adds, "easily will the spirit of error delude you, if you neglect science; nor hath the cunning enemy any machinations more efficacious to remove love from the heart, than that of causing you to walk negligently and without reason; for God is wisdom, and he wishes himself to be loved, not alone affectionately, but also wisely," "Sapientia est Deus, et vult se amari non solum dulciter sed sapienter."‡ All activity, according to the schoolmen, springs from the entrance of knowledge; the state of knowledge is the happy rest of contemplation, heavenly peace!

The Church, collectively, prays that she may ever advance in spiritual progress,§ and the desire of her individual members may be learned from those ancient rituals, by which it appears that there was a mass expressly for obtaining wisdom.|| In ages of faith men valued wisdom; probably it was that love which gave them faith. Who now values wisdom? Schleiermacker, speaking of a nation, which at present assumes the right of giving laws and philosophy to all Europe, says, "these proud men, respected far more than they deserve, know of no other redemption but gain and profit. Their zeal for knowledge is only a mere pretence, a sham fight; their wisdom of life, a false bauble set with art; and their holy freedom itself serves only too often to selfishness: they are never in earnest unless

where it is a question of handling things of some sort or other; for knowledge serves them only to trade withal, and of its dead wood they make masts and rudders for their commercial life's voyage."* If such be the testimony of a friend, or at least of one who approves of their position, in regard to the Catholic wisdom, what might not be said by those who esteem that position itself, an evidence that the truth or a due sense of the importance of truth is not in them? Even setting aside the religious view, methinks one might reasonably prefer to such a state of things that enthusiasm in the old schools of philosophy, which made it necessary for king Ptolomy to prohibit the lectures of Hegesia, the Cyrenaic, or the disciple of Aristippus?† "The danger which he sought to obviate," argued ignorance, "but how much better was the desire from which it sprang, than the apathy now pervading breasts, perhaps equally as ignorant?" "Sophists," says Novalis, "are persons, who, attentive to the weakness of philosophy seek to make use of it for their own advantage, or for certain unphilosophic unworthy ends. They have, in truth, nothing to do with philosophy, they are its bitterest enemies."‡

Men value science, and love to pursue physical truth: though in a country eminent for its pretensions, we are told by one who engaged in such pursuits, "that those who have hitherto cultivated science, knew, or should have known, that there was no demand for it, that it led to little honour, and to less profit."§ Still many illustrious men laboured at this mine, and, doubtless, with a disinterested love; but of wisdom, in the divine sense of the term, of the higher and nobler study that can unfold its everlasting gates, who is heard to say with Job, "non dabitur aurum obrizum pro ea, nec appendetur argentum in commutatione ejus? Non adæquabitur ei aurum vel vitrum, nec commutabuntur pro ea vasa auri?" Yet the monks and hermits of the middle ages, who left all for it, yea, many kings and secular men, who, in affection, had followed them, though retained in the world by a sense of duty, might assuredly have said it, and would as assuredly have been believed by every one around them, to say it with truth. The schoolmen were not like those trencher philosophers, which, in the later ages of the Roman state, were unusually in the houses of great persons, of which kind Lucian

* Ex. Miscellan. Lib. ii. tit. 52.

† Stromat. Lib. vii. 12.

‡ S. Bonav. Meditat. Vitæ Christi, cap. xlv.

§ Prayer on the Feast of St. Dominick.

|| Annales Camaldulensium, append.

* Reden über die Religion, 15.

† Cicero Tuscul. i. 34.

‡ Schriften, ii. 133.

§ Babbage, on the Decline of Science. 1830.

maketh a merry description of the philosopher, that the great lady took to accompany her in her coach, and would needs have him carry her little dog, which he doing officiously, and yet uncomely, the page scoffed and said, "that he doubted the philosopher of a Stoic, would turn to be a Cynic. They were not like the philosophers of whom Diogenes said, in answer to one who asked him, why they were the followers of rich men? answering "soberly and sharply," as Lord Bacon observes, "because they knew what they had need of." We have contrasted monks with sophists, but what shall I say of those who loved monks? The type of royalty in the middle ages was not a soldier, not a lawgiver, not a mock pageant, who could judge of dishes rather than of intelligences; but it was the kingly state of man in primal innocence, when an angel might have said to him,

"And thou, thyself, seem'st otherwise inclined,
Than to a worldly crown; addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute."

Many courts of feudal barons even were then little academies, still and contemplative in living art. "*Beatitudo est gaudium de veritate*;" these words of St. Augustin express the whole mind of the ages of faith. The moderns are astonished at the monuments of their indefatigable researches, which have come down to us, and here they can learn the secret of all this intellectual activity; it was the conviction, not that glory and profit should be the prize of learning, but that the joy of knowing truth was beatitude. The act of wisdom, according to the angel of the school, "is a kind of beginning and participation of the glory of the blessed spirits in heaven, and therefore it approaches the nearest to that felicity."* Peter the Venerable says, "they who approached to the wisdom of angels, must also have approached to the beatitude of angels; for the wisdom of angels is on that very account true wisdom, because it is happy."†

"The rational mind," says Hugo of St. Victor, "is one, and it generates from itself intellect, one from one; and when sometimes it beholds how subtle, how true, how convenient, how pleasant it is, it soon loves it, and rejoices itself in it; it sees and it is amazed, and it wonders how itself could ever have found such a thing: vehemently it desires always to look at it, always to possess it, always to be delighted with it: it pleases

by itself; it pleases on account of itself; nor is there any thing which is sought beyond it, because in it all is loved. In that, contemplation of truth is delectable in vision, sweet in possession, delightful in enjoyment. With it the mind rests and never feels weariness, because by that one, yet not solitary companion, it is gladdened. Wisdom is life, and the love of wisdom is the felicity of life;—*Sapientia enim vita, et amor sapientiæ est felicitas vitæ.*"* "Amongst all the occupations of men," says St. Thomas, "the most perfect, the most sublime, the most useful, and the most agreeable, is the study of wisdom."† "Who doth not desire to be initiated in such mysteries," exclaims the great Christian philosopher, John Picus of Mirandula; "who, casting aside all thought for human things, despising the goods of fortune, and neglecting the body, doth not long for this divine banquet, even while on earth, and moistened with the nectar of eternity to give the mortal animal in exchange for immortality! Who doth not wish to be agitated by these Socratic furies, sung by Plato in the *Phædo*, that, with the rowing of wings and feet, he may pass hence from the world, which is given up to malice, and be borne with the swiftest course to the celestial Jerusalem!"‡

"Philosophy can be pretended," observes Quintilian, confirming his assertion by adducing the example of those who sat for a short time in the schools of philosophers, in order that afterwards, in public sad, at home dissolute, they might acquire authority by despising others.§ Philosophy can be pursued from unworthy motives. When Plato came to Syracuse, and Dionysius was seized with zeal for philosophic study, the royal palace used to be covered with dust from the crowd of geometers which attended; but when Dionysius fell from this ardour for philosophy, and devoted himself again to wine and dissoluteness, immediately, as if metamorphosed by Circe, forgetfulness, discordance, and ignorance took possession of them.||

The love of wisdom which inspired Catholic generations, in ages of faith, had nothing in common with such shows of philosophy, nor could its effects have arisen from any passion to which they were subordinate.

"*Hæc sunt sola quæ quærere debent homines veritas et bonitas.*" Thus speaks the

* S. Thom. 1. 2. Q. 66. art. 5. ad. 2.

† S. Pet. Ven. Epist. Lib. iii. 7.

• De Tribus Diebus, cap. 21, 22.

+ S. Thom. *Adversus Gentes*, c. 2.

‡ Joan. Picus *Mirandula de Hominum Dignitate*. § xii. 3.

|| Plutarch de Sig. Ver. *Amicit.* ix.

whole school through the mouth of Hugo of St. Victor.* Where the ancient institutions and modes of thinking have given place to those of the civilization which arises out of the modern notions, the approved language of instructors is not precisely this: if it were, indeed, their very structures, the stones themselves would cry out against them, as Pugin, in his architectural contrasts, might convince us. There are a few other things about which men would be told they might justly be troubled; and, in fact, so far from thinking that truth and goodness are proposed as the only objects worthy of an earnest pursuit, I do not perceive how one can avoid concluding that thoughtlessness and indifference to truth, which does not concern personal respectability, are even studied as amongst the necessary arts of life. For do we not witness every day the evidence of truth, on being thrust home, treated precisely as was the remembrance of death by Justice Shallow, "Oh, to see how many of mine old acquaintance are dead! We must all follow—certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure; death, as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?"

We have no occasion to look so far back as to the civilization of the ancient world, to find a verification of the truth of what Socrates remarks, in the sixth book of Plato's Republic, where he says, "at present, those who apply while young to philosophy, and who seem to be the greatest philosophers, attach themselves to what is between economy and money-making, and they keep aloof from the most difficult branch, which consists in discussions, for this I call the most difficult. In after-life, if, when invited by any one who perseveres in philosophy, they consent to hear their discussions, they think they do great things and suppose that it is something which is gratuitous on their part, unnecessary, and quite of secondary importance, as an accidental exercise at the side of their real business. But when they come to old age, with the exception of a very few, they are extinguished much more completely than the sun of Heraclitus, inasmuch as they are never again illuminated."†

This callous insensibility to truths, which are above the business of mere secular life or the ends of ambition, was evidently playing a great part in the contest of the two systems which divided the Christian world.

An instance in which it was very manifest, is mentioned by a recent author, who relates, that a philosopher of the modern opinions, who was conversing with a Catholic priest, acknowledged that it would be more judicious in his party to renounce all idea of appealing to the authority of the Fathers to confirm them; but added, "still you must admit that we have Augustin on our side, with respect to the Eucharist." "Indeed," exclaimed the other, opening his breviary, and showing the words of St. Augustin in testimony to the Catholic faith. What followed?—"You are right," was the reply. "Let me note the passage down, for I shall be amused to see how it will puzzle my good brethren in our college." He only thought of displaying his own erudition. Alas! how far behind the Roman philosophers. "Ego enim, si aut ostentatione aliqua adductus, aut studio certandi ad hanc potissimam philosophiam me applicavi: non modo stultitiam meani, sed etiam mores et naturam condemnandam puto."*

It is certain, also, that the influence of the love of wisdom in ages of faith, upon life and the order of society in general, produced results wholly unlike those of the intellectual cultivation at present.

Philosophy, according to the views entertained respecting it in the middle ages, is something different from and something higher than merely the means of serving one or other of the various branches of academic learning and science, of furthering one or other especial object or pursuit of life. Repeatedly, moreover, did the scholastic and mystic philosophers enforce what the wise men of antiquity had observed, that when the whole life is dissipated and lost in external employments, pleasures, or endeavours after profit, so that nothing peculiarly internal, no such feeling or sentiment, nay, not even once a real inward thought remains or can find room; there also, philosophy can find no hearing for the words of inward life, and can hope for no corresponding echo for her higher thoughts, nor for that deep sentiment from which she proceeds.† Frederick Schlegel points out the distinction between the academic instruction of modern times and philosophy in the true sense of the word, and as it was understood in the middle ages. "This," he observes, "is something very different from the science of any particular profession or faculty pursued by young men who are

* De Sacramentis, Lib. ii. p. 14. c. 9.

† De Repub. Lib. vi.

* Cicero, Lucullus.

† F. Schlegel Philosophie der Sprache, 15.

preparing for the various employments of civil life. Philosophy," he adds, "will never suffer herself to be studied as it were aside, only once and for a short time, as a superfluous article of luxury: it is only with entire earnestness and with the fulness of love that she can be attained, and indeed, the true beginning itself consists in this earnestness of thought and in this highest love."*

Language like this would now be thought to denote some young and dangerous enthusiast of the Romantic school, and yet it is only what we find on the tongue of the holy fathers. "I wish to prove to you, my dear Eudoxius," says St. Gregory Nazianzen, writing to that rhetorician, "that you should take care not to neglect philosophy, for which nature has given you such an opening, and not to apply to any other profession for which you would be less qualified. This is what you should do, not only because the philosophy to which I exhort you is the most elevated of all things, but also because it is what is, besides, peculiarly adapted to you. Now it is a proverb which forbids us to attempt to stop the course of a river; and a poet has wisely interdicted music to him who is destined for horsemanship, lest he should succeed neither in horsemanship nor in music: what, then, are the symptoms of this natural aptitude which I remark in you?—the tranquillity and simplicity of your life and manners, and a soul totally estranged from all that relates to disguise, to cunning, and imposture; and besides, the elevation of your genius and of your thoughts, and a certain instinct which carries you, without an effort, to meditation. I might add too, that you differ from the generality of rhetoricians in this respect—that you know how to blush. Beware, then, how you renounce what you have already acquired of philosophy—how you prefer a second place in a secondary profession to the first in the most sublime of all professions. When you may rise like the eagle, be not content to excel among the populace of birds. How long shall we suffer the inflation of pride on account of vile and fleeting things? How long shall we abandon ourselves to these vain dissipations and multitudinous illusions? How long shall we be moved to ecstasy by vain applause? Let us forsake these chimeras; let us become men, casting off these dreams, escaping beyond these shadows; let us leave to others these pleasures and luxuries, which at the bottom

contain more bitterness than charms; let envy, let circumstances, let fortune (for these are the names given to the inconsistency of things here below) occupy, agitate, and distract other men: no more speak to us of thrones, or principalities, or riches, or honours, or elevations, or of that despicable glory which, after all, dishonours us much more than contempt and derision when it gets possession of our soul, nor of all these vain representations of theatres which occupy the world. For us, let us fix our affections upon wisdom, let us desire to want every thing else but God, who alone is our wealth, for eternity." Such was the voice, too, from the Palatine schools, as well as from the cloisters of the middle age—such was the desire of wisdom in those whose hearts were clean. Thus intense and undivided was the noble love that glowed within them. It was not merely a pure intellectual choice—it was also a hearty zeal and passionate affection, which urged their rapid steps tumultuous, by eagerness impelled of truth and goodness. But how can our lukewarm breasts conceive this intenser fervency? How can we comprehend the emotions, the clear spirit of him who raiseth Aquin above Arpinum's name; who, when on earth, while explaining a book which treats on the mystery of the blessed Trinity, observed not that the flame of a taper had burnt down to his hand and scorched it, so spiritual and impassible had already become the fleshly weeds through brightness of celestial vision.

The language of the middle ages, in reference to philosophy, had less resemblance to that of the modern schools than to the celebrated sayings of the ancients, "that the precepts of wisdom are of such divine sweetness, that they should be enjoyed as ambrosia and nectar, and that all who seek happiness must learn to philosophize."* It was more opposed to the maxims of later moralists than to the replies of Pythagoras and Anaxagoras, who, being asked for what end man was created, replied, that he might behold the sky, and that he might contemplate the heavens.

On referring to ecclesiastical history, we find that studies were always dear to the Church. As Berthier remarks, "the inconveniences of science appeared to her, in all ages, as infinitely less to be feared than the consequences of ignorance or of a superficial instruction."† The zeal of the Holy

* Jamblich. *Adhortat. ad Philosoph.* cap. 204.

† Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles, xii—xv. *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* xiv.

* Id. 10.

See to promote studies was displayed in every age. The most important canon laws are made to yield to this object. Thus the fourth Lateran council, which restricts all clergymen to one benefice, adds this exception: "Nevertheless, when sublime and learned persons are to be honoured with greater benefices, when reason demands it, the Apostolic See can give a dispensation."* In conformity with which provision, Pope Honorius permitted Michael Scot, while studying Arabic and Hebrew, to have more than one benefice. The zeal of Urban IV. for science and philosophy may be collected from the letter addressed to him by Campanus of Navarra, which is given by Tiraboschi. It was, in effect, owing to his encouragement that St. Thomas of Aquin undertook his work on Aristotle. Of the general desire, in this respect, we have only to open any of our ancient books to find proof. Hear Hugo of St. Victor speaking of his studies in early life:—"I can affirm that I never despised any thing which belonged to erudition, but I have often learned many things which others treated as a joke or a madness. I remember, while I was only a scholastic, to have studied carefully to know the names of every thing that I saw; I used to commit to memory all the sentences, questions, and oppositions, with their solutions, which I had learned in the day; I used to describe geometrical figures with charcoal on the floor. I do not mention this to you in order to boast of my science, which is nothing or but little, but that I may show you that he proceeds best who proceeds with order—without making any great jump. Many things, indeed, you may find in histories and other writings which, taken by themselves, seem to be of little or no utility; but yet, if you consider their connexion with other things, you will find that they are useful and necessary. Learn all things, and you will find afterwards that nothing is superfluous. Science cribbed and confined is not pleasant."†

Alanus de Insulis speaks to the same effect:—"Learn," he says, "as if you were to live for ever; live, as if you were to die on the morrow. So the apostle says, 'Libros lege; et affer tecum libros duos.' When you commence any reading, do not relinquish it the next moment, but adhere to it faithfully, and do not as if through disgust pass on to another."‡

* Cap. xxiv.

† Hugo S. Vict. *Eruditionis Didascalice*, Lib. vi. c. 3.

‡ Sum. de Arte Præd. cap. 86.

But without visiting the avowed worshippers of Wisdom, who devoted themselves wholly to converse with her in cloistered shades, let us hear only a few eminent Catholic men remaining in the world. "I will take this praise to myself," says John Picus of Mirandula, "and to be praised for this I shall not blush—that for no other cause have I philosophized, unless in order that I might philosophize; nor have I ever hoped or sought any reward or fruit from my studies and lucubrations, excepting the cultivation of my mind and the knowledge of truth; of which I am so covetous, and with which I am so much in love, that having abandoned all care of private or public affairs, I have given myself wholly up to contemplation; from which no accusations of the envious, no reproaches of the enemies of wisdom, ever have been able or ever shall have power to deter me."*

Marsilius Ficinus, in a letter to Benedict Caluccio, writes in these terms:—"I shall continue to defend religion with all my strength; not that religion wants such defence, for it stands by God's will in despite of enemies, but because I then only seem to myself to live happily, yea, rather, then only to live, when I either write or speak or think upon divine subjects."† Whole nations were characterized by this spirit. "When the Spaniards apply themselves to letters," says an ancient writer, "it is never for the sake of gain, but only through the love of knowledge."‡ Even until these days of purification the Spaniards were said to prefer their morning walks and conversations philosophical, on the Puerta del Sol at Madrid, the Zocodover at Toledo, the Plaza de Santo Domingo at Seville, and the Plaza de Vivarrambla and the Zacatin at Grenada, to all the spectacles and amusements of Paris or London.

But let us again hear the Italian philosophers of the middle ages. Hermolaus Barbarus, patriarch of Aquileia, writes as follows to Antonio Calmo, patriarch of Venice:—"Take courage, Antonio, thou who didst call me sleeping and reluctant to the priesthood! I bear these adverse with more constancy than formerly I enjoyed prosperous things. The Lord hath sent me help from his holy place, and hath strengthened me out of Sion. Let some trust in chariots, others in horses; we will invoke the name of our God. Again I say, be of good courage, Antonio! We have

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. de *Hominum Dignitate*.

† Mars. Ficin. *Epist. Lib. i.*

‡ Lucii Marinei Siculi de reb. Hispaniæ, Lib. ii.

risen, and are standing upright; mirabiles elationes maris, mirabilis in altis Dominus. I who have philosophized so many years for others ought to be able, for myself also, to philosophize. I see the game of fortune, I understand the force of the tempest; I consider and estimate the full extent of these calamities; I am happy and at peace. For letters was I born, to letters was I dedicated, without letters I cannot live, though I can live without the things which are obstacles to letters. I have borne many honours, in the republic, with what favour it is not for me to say. During twelve years my time was lost to letters. These events have now released me, and I return to them. O happy calamity, which restores letters to me and me to letters, or rather me to myself! O felicitous overthrow, which gave me back peace! O delightful tempest, which brought me security! O sweet bitterness, which conducted me, after a long tossing on the waves—do not say after shipwreck—into the sweetest port!*

Literature is not an unknown word in the ancient writings, as some have supposed. In the proem of the translation of the History of the Normans, written in the thirteenth century, we are told that knowledge and science are acquired "by literature;" but to appreciate with justice the passages which enforce its importance, we must recollect that by letters men in ages of faith understood a study which was subservient to the highest purposes. "Dum secularibus literis instruimur," says St. Gregory the Great, "in spiritualibus adjuvamus;" and that this remark was verified in the very philosopher whose words are above quoted will appear from reading his letter to Picus of Mirandula, in which he says, "I wish we might sometimes live together, that we might philosophize together on nature, on God, on holy manners. I cannot express how much I long for this. I beseech you, if you ever deem me worthy of your benevolence, grant me now, as Hermolaus the priest, an equal or higher place in your affections, that him whom you loved as a pagan of the world you may more ardently embrace when made a soldier of Christ."†

Beautiful are the words of Petrarch:—"Thou knowest, O Lord, before whom is all my desire, that I have never sought more from letters than that I might be

made good. Thou who searchest the reins and the heart knowest that even in youth I was never so desirous of glory as not to prefer being good to being learned."*

Angelo Politian defends learning and poetry by appealing to the judgment of Martianus Genazanensis, who, although of incredible severity of life, and a preacher most revered by his people, yet disdains not to cultivate both.†

In the middle ages there was not heard the trivial declamation of certain poets against prose, or of certain prose writers against poesy, of naturalists against metaphysicians, or of mathematicians against those who did not study mathematics; but all sciences, all arts, all modes of cultivating or of imparting the perception of truth and beauty received a homage from society and from men of holy zeal. "Gyrum cœli circuivi sola."‡ "Metaphysical science may speak thus," says Duns Scotus, "for it is like a circle which contains all things. Vide arcum, et benedic qui fecit illum; valde speciosus est in splendore suo, et gyrauit cœlum in circuitu gloriæ suæ.§ The metaphysic habit," he continues, "is a certain mystic bow, darting the arrows of truth against the enemies who are of falsehood; and therefore is it, as it were, a refulgent bow amongst the clouds of glory. Behold it, therefore and bless God who made it; for it encompasseth the heavens, that is the whole university of creatures, and especially of such whose habitation is in heaven. It says 'circuivi' for this science goes round inquiring from all things truly, without deception, and generally without exception; and therefore, in a figure, it is as the river Phison, of which we read in Genesis that it flows round the whole land of Evilath, where gold is produced, that is, wisdom. Evilath is interpreted foolish, and such are all human sciences of themselves, metaphysics excepted. Lastly, we read Sola, for amongst all human sciences that alone excels. She sits alone, admired and venerated by all as a queen in the sight of all creatures."||

Richard of St. Victor, in a very curious passage of his treatise on the condition of the interior man, traces the causes and consequences of a neglect of learning. "We see many," he says, "who after giving brilliant proofs of their study and excellent fruits of science, when perhaps to some

* Ang. Politian. Epist. Lib. xii.

† Epist. Lib. xii.

• De Ignorantia Sui Ipsius et Aliorum.

† Politian. Miscellaneorum Centuriæ Primæ. Præfat. ‡ Eccles. 24. § Id. 43.

|| Duns Scoti Metaphys. Proœm.

honourable grade promoted, or when they undertake the care of any administration, immediately begin to despise the discipline of their learning, and thenceforth to hold themselves at leisure only for secular business, to destroy in one day all the followers of wisdom, and to publish their hidden secrets. What would these do if they received the kingdom of Nabuchodonoser? How many, again, do we see, who, after long application to spiritual exercises, and after having received the gift of contemplation, when perhaps by any temptation or fatigue fallen from that sublime height, lay aside all care of spiritual studies, and expose themselves every hour to all wandering and vain discourses. What else do they but kill their wise men? Mark what they do in observing the progress of Nabuchodonoser. First, he orders all the wise men of Babylon to be killed, and presently after the wise men of the Jews are sought for to be slain. Behold by what degrees the studious mind often is dissolved, loses its vivacity, and falls gradually from the highest to the lowest state. First, it abandons the care of secular and afterwards of spiritual learning, gives itself up wholly to exterior affairs, and kills in itself, as it were, all the followers of science and wisdom by deserting all study of human arts, all instance in contemplation, meditation, reading, and prayer. Of the wise men of the Jews it is said that they were sought out for destruction—that is, an occasion or some way of excuse is desired, that with more safety and freedom, and with a more secure conscience, the dissolved mind may cast away the studies of sacred erudition; for thus we sometimes pretend weakness of body, sometimes charity, that, deserting the contemplative life, we may devote ourselves to exterior business. Thus an occasion, and as if opportunity of place, is sought out for killing Daniel with the other wise men of the Jews.*

The love which men in ages of faith entertained for wisdom, and the ardour with which they sought to promote intellectual cultivation, and to prevent poverty from becoming an obstacle or an excuse, which is the reason alleged by Lothaire in 820 for constituting academies,† may be inferred also from the multitude of scholastic foundations which then arose, and from the extraordinary honours conferred upon them. Having already visited the

schools and universities of the middle ages, we shall not be detained long at present in confirming this observation by reference to history, though we cannot avoid arresting our course to remark a few prominent facts which demonstrate the efforts which were then made to provide for the extension of all studies which had truth and goodness for their end.

From the earliest age, as we observed before, the school was a general appendage to the Basilica. According to Landulph senior, the church of St. Ambrose at Milan, in the eleventh century, could boast of two philosophical schools which were well frequented, the professors of which were supported by the archbishops. Most churches elsewhere had similar institutions. The university of Paris grew by degrees, beginning in the church of Nôtre Dame, with theology, having its school of arts at the church of St. Julian; then having schools in the abbey of St. Victor, and four halls in the Rue au Fôurre. In process of time it acquired its schools of decretals and medicine, while masters used to hire any rooms they thought fit to give their lectures in, until about the year 1250, when colleges, which were nothing but hospices built through charity for lodging and teaching poor scholars, began to be erected, of which the first was the Sorbonne.*

When the opinion became prevalent that the interests of philosophy could be better served by universities than by the separate monastic schools in which they had before been cultivated, the number of the former which arose throughout Europe gave remarkable proof of the zeal and ardour of those times for learning. Before the pseudo-reformation sixty-six were established, of which sixteen were in Germany, Paris and Bologna being the two first cities to institute them in a regular form. In the latter, in 1260, there were ten thousand students; at Oxford, in 1200, there were four thousand. At Paris, in the sixteenth century, there were forty thousand scholars; in the single college of Guienne, at Bourdeaux, there were two thousand five hundred scholars; the university of Toulouse was equally flourishing.†

Designedly, however, these institutions were not suffered to concentrate themselves in capitals. After the troubles in the university of Paris in 1228, when students removed thence to Rheims, Orleans, Anjou,

* Rich. S. Vic. De Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. i. P. i. c. 7.

† Murat. Script. Rer. Ital. l. 11. 151.

* Pasquier, Recherches de la France, liv. ix. 14. † Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. v. 253.

and even to England, Italy, and Spain, Pope Gregory IX., while exerting himself to the utmost to prevent that university from falling to pieces, observed that "nevertheless division and dispersion are very necessary for the interests of science itself." The multiplication of universities proceeded, therefore, under the highest sanction: that of Montpelier was founded in 1180, those of Orleans and Toulouse in the first half of the thirteenth, those of Lyons and Avignon in the fourteenth century. In Italy, the universities of Ravenna, Salerno, and Pisa were founded in the twelfth, those of Arezzo, Ferrara, Padua, Perugia, Piacenza, Sienna, Treviso, Vercelli, Vicenza, and Naples, in the thirteenth, and that of Pavia in the fourteenth century, when that of Palermo also took its rise. The universities of Salamanca, Valencia, and Coimbra were founded in the thirteenth, those of Toledo and Alcalá in the fifteenth century. The German universities were of later origin than the Italian: those of Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne, and Erfurt, arose in the fourteenth, those of Leipzig, Freiberg, Treves, Tübingen, Mainz, and Louvain in the fifteenth century; that of Cracow, in Poland, was founded in 1847.

The object of the Holy See and of the Episcopal Order in founding and promoting these academies, may be learnt from the bull of Pope Urban VI., approving of the proposed university at Kulm, in the north of Prussia, where the schools of Thorn, Elbing, and Danzig, under the Teutonic order, had been long famous; for it contains these words:—"Faith itself may be thus extended, the simple instructed, equity preserved, judgment cultivated, and the intelligence of men illuminated. Let there be, then, a fountain of science, from whose plenitude all who desire to be imbued with learning may be refreshed." In consequence, however, of the death of Winrich, and other events, this projected institution was not established, and the monastic school alone remained.*

Stephen Pasquier remarks, that the connexion with the church and the episcopal authority was in general indicated even by the locality, as in the instances of Paris, Toulouse, Orleans, Lyons, Poitiers, Angers, Bourdeaux, Bourges, Cahors, Nantes, Grenoble, Valence, and Rheims, where the universities were all annexed to cathedral churches; of those in France, Caen, which

was founded by the English, being the only exception.*

With respect to the magnitude and religious grandeur of these institutions, there are sufficient details on record from which we can form an opinion. Thus, in Louvain, were forty colleges, of which four were devoted to teach philosophy, which till lately retained the name of the signs that had first distinguished them—the Lily, the Castle, the Falcon, and the Boar. Many abbeys had also houses here for their students. At Douai there were sumptuous colleges belonging to the abbeys of Marchiennes, Anchin and St. Vaast.†

Gozechenus, the scholastic, in his epistle to Valcherus, his ancient disciple, speaks of Liege in these terms:—"This flower of Gaul, like another Athens, flourishes in the study of liberal discipline, and, what is better, shines in the observance of divine religion; so that, as far as relates to letters, you may feel no want of the academy of Plato; and as to what concerns religious worship, you need not wish for the Rome of Leo."‡

The zeal and charity of private persons were the great sources of their magnificence. In the university of Paris three chairs were founded by private men: the first of theology, by Robert de Sorbon, under St. Louis; that of mathematics, by Peter Ramus, in 1568; and the third of theology, to explain the Scriptures, by aid of the fathers and of the Greek and Hebrew tongues, in 1606, by Jean de Rouen, provisor of the college of our Lady at Rouen. The care and superintendence of the universities was an object of the greatest solicitude to the sovereign pontiffs; for these learned incorporations, unlike those of the present day, were practically convinced that they stood in need of reform from time to time, and always willing to submit to it. That of Paris underwent several reformatations: the first was by Cardinal St. Stephen, legate of Pope Innocent III., in the year 1215; the second was by Simon, cardinal of St. Cecilia, legate in 1278; the third, which was of more importance, was made at Rome in 1366, in presence of Boniface, chancellor of the university, by two cardinals delegated by Pope Urban V.; the last and most signal was by William Cardinal d'Estouteville, legate in 1452.§

* *Récherches de la France*, IX.

† *Les Delices des Paisbas*.

‡ Ermenrici Monach. *Angiensis de Grammatica apud Mabil. Vet. Analect.*

§ Pasquier, *Récherches de la France*, liv. ix. 25.

* Voigt *Geschichte Preussens*, v. 491.

The schools of Paris enjoyed singular privileges, and the highest reputation throughout the Christian world. John Picus of Mirandula observes, in his *Apolo-*gy, that the academy of Paris had lately laid down certain articles of which the English said that they did not pass the sea, and that, he might add, that they did not pass the Alps. "Nevertheless," he continues, "I have used the phrase as Thomas places it, and the common way, calling the common way of theologians that which is now commonly held at Paris, where especially flourishes the study of theology; so that my own conclusion, on account of my reverence for the university of Paris, I only propose as probable."*

With strict justice, in fact, as well as eloquence, does an ancient professor in that capital allude to the college in which he delivered his remarkable lectures, saying, "From the thirteenth century, and the time of St. Louis, the name of Sorbonne recalls the great school of France, or rather that of the world. All that was illustrious in the middle ages has sat on these benches. The Irish subtlety of Scotus, the African ardour of Raymund Lully, the poetic ideality of Petrarch—all have met here. Those who could rest nowhere, the authors of the Jerusalem and of the *Divina Comedia*, the exile of Florence, the wandering contemplatist of the three worlds, met here for an instant. In the seventeenth century this inclosure, renewed by Richelieu, witnessed the first essay of the Christian Plato, Malebranche. Such are the noble traditions attached to this place. This house is old however much they may whiten its walls; it has seen much; many ages have lived here—all have left something here."†

That the love of truth and wisdom which inspired the clean of heart could influence even the government of states and the public mind of nations, during ages of faith, might be inferred from merely observing the honours and privileges conferred upon those who were engaged in the pursuit of learning. Although we before touched on all this ground, I think the reader will not regret paying it, in passing, a second visit. Luther, during his calmer intervals, lamented the decay of the universities and the disuse of the honours with which kings and people had treated wisdom. "Formerly," says he, "masters of art, were honoured: one carried lighted

flambeaux before them. It was a great festival when doctors were made. One went round the city on horseback; one put on one's best clothes. All that is no more; but I wish that good customs were revived."*

Such a wish, indeed, was not consistent with his assertion at other times, that "the devil never invented more cunning and more pernicious means to root up utterly the gospel of Christ, than the design of founding the universities;" or with his opinion that the academies are figured by the idol Moloch, supported on the authority of Master Philip Melancthon, who, in his book called *Didymus*, commends Wicklyf for a wise man,—"*qui omnium primus vidit academias esse Satanæ synagogas.*" However, I have not here to reconcile Luther with himself or with Master Philip. I merely cite his words, on one occasion, to show that the privileges and honours of scholars had a side which even he could not disrelish. Stephen Pasquier mentions some of the privileges of the scholars of Paris. By edict of Philip-le-Bel, in 1299, their goods could not be seized for debt; by that of Louis Hutin, they could transport their goods wherever they chose, without molestation; by that of Philip le Valois, in 1340, they were exempt from all taxes, and they could not be summoned from Paris for any trial. Philip-le-Bel, in granting privileges to the university of Lyons, endeavoured to reconcile the citizens to the advantages conferred upon the scholars, by reminding them that the state is adorned and honoured by studies, and that it is therefore for the interest of the citizens themselves to bear cheerfully the superior privileges which are granted in order to promote learning.† All scholars were noble, and carried swords. If a scholar travelled, all farmers were bound to supply him, at least for hire, with a horse. On arriving at a town, where all lodgings were hired, the citizens were bound to yield him up one; and, as we before observed, no master of a house could eject a scholar who lodged with him. Artizans who might annoy him by noise or offensive odours, were obliged to remove their shops or manufactories elsewhere. The scholar who studied at Paris or Toulouse, was a Parisian and a Toulousian, and enjoyed all the privileges without the

* Michelet Mem. de Luth. tom. iii. 107.

† Pasquier, *Récherches de la France*, liv. ix. 37.

* Joan. P. Mirand. *Apolo-*gia. † Michelet.

charges of citizenship. Not only did the scholar pay no tax, but it was a punishable offence to put him on the list of contributors.*

Of the dignity with which the persons of the studious were invested, proof might be seen in some curious monuments of the middle age, which were solemnly erected to attest the punishment of those who had forgotten it: thus at the corner of a street in Paris, on a wall of the Augustinian monastery, was represented the wrong which had been done to Friar Peter Gougy, of that order, doctor in theology, and how the sergeants who had injured him were punished at the demand of the rector of the university.† The servants of Messire Charles de Sanoisy, Great Chamberlain of France, and the king's favourite, having rashly attacked some scholars in a procession of the university in the church of St. Catherine, of the Vale of Scholars, by sentence of the king's council the house of that personage was demolished, and Sanoisy obliged to found and endow a chapel in favour of the university, and to pay besides to it one thousand livres; which sentence was executed, but the house afterwards was rebuilt by consent of the university, which in Pasquier's time was called the Hostel de Lorraine; but with this condition, that there should be a painting attached to the wall, representing the whole history and the judgment.‡

With this liberality of rulers, the zeal and ardour of the people corresponded. The schools of philosophy in the middle ages were not then filled with boys of sixteen years of age; the greatest number, as Gervaise remarks, were grown-up men, many of them married and fathers of families, who thought it neither frivolous nor dishonourable, after discharging the duties of their state, to hear a master of philosophy.§ The diligence of more youthful disciples was, however, well secured by wise provisions, which verified the saying of Alanus de Insulis,—

"Denuce fit corylus: de glande fit ardua quercus:
De parvo puero sæpe peritus homo."||

Philip, Abbot of Good Hope in Hannonia, in the diocese of Cambrai, writes to Engelbert, who was at Paris, and exhorts

him to persevere diligently in study, adding, "for not merely to have been at Paris, but at Paris to have acquired learning, is honourable—non enim Parisius fuisse, sed Parisius honestam scientiam acquisisse honestum est."* Pope Alexander IV., writing to the masters and scholars of Paris, in 1256, mentions their ardour for study, "to which," he says, "they have sacrificed every thing," and of Paris he says, "Hence proceeds an illustrious progeny of doctors, a high race of learned men, by whom the Christian people are illuminated and the Catholic faith is strengthened."†

Many of the disciples and masters of the middle ages might have said with Abailard, "I was so inflamed with the love of study, that, renouncing the pomp of military glory with the inheritance and privileges of my ancestors, I left the court of Mars that I might be educated in the bosom of Minerva."‡

To form a notion of the enthusiasm which men of great intellectual powers excited in the schools, we must attend to a few details in the early life of that celebrated philosopher, before the tendency of his disputations was obnoxious to reproof. When, through the jealousy of Guillaume de Champeaux, his first master, he was obliged to remove from Paris to Melun, to give lessons on philosophy, such numbers flocked there to hear him that the classes of Paris seemed deserted: then, being encouraged by this admiration, he ventured to approach nearer to the capital, and opened classes at Corbeil, which is only five or six leagues distant from it, and thus the disciples of the two schools of Champeaux and Abailard could dispute in fresh combats. Guillaume de Champeaux, even after becoming a monk in St. Victor, continued to give his scholastic lessons, and to instruct a crowd of pupils in rhetoric, philosophy, and theology. Abailard, on returning from Brittany, used to frequent these lectures of his old master, notwithstanding the jealousy with which his triumphs had been received by him. Nevertheless his school of philosophy, on the hill of St. Geneviève, was opened, as he said in order that from that eminence he might batter his adversaries in the schools of the university, under Champeaux, at St. Victor. We have the letter of Folko to Abailard in these terms, "Rome which used to infuse

* Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. v.

† Pasquier, IX. 27.

‡ Recherches de la France, III. 29.

§ Vie d'Abailard, Lib. i.

|| Alani de Insulis, liber Parabolarum.

* Budæus, Hist. Universit. Paris. tom. ii.

† Wadding Annales Minorum, tom. iv. an. 1257.

‡ Epist. i.

science of all arts into hearers, sends her students to be instructed under you. No distance of country, no height of mountains, no depth of valleys, no road, however infested with dangers of all kinds, can detain those who are hastening to hear you. The interjacent sea and the terrible raging of the waves, doth not intimidate the crowd of English youths, who, despising all perils, flock hither on hearing of your name. Remote Brittany destines her animals to be nurtured here. The people of Angers, having overcome their wildness, converse with you in their sons: Poitou and Ireland, Normandy, Flanders, Germany, and Suabia, revere your genius; I omit mention of all inhabiting the city of Paris, as well as those from the most distant extremities of France, who so thirst to be taught by you, as if no discipline could be found where you are not." In this curious passage the facts are hardly exaggerated.

When Abailard, after his ignominious punishment, having renounced the world, had retired to St. Denis, where the abbot insisted upon his resuming his ancient exercises to satisfy the general anxiety to hear him again lecture, such a multitude of disciples flocked to hear him that there were not sufficient provisions in the country to support them. More than three thousand came together from all Latinity, from Italy, Germany, England, Spain, Flanders, Brittany, and all provinces of France. From this school came forth Guy du Châtel, soon afterwards Pope under the name of Celestin II., the famous Peter Lombard, Bishop of Paris, Gaudefroi, Bishop of Auxerre, and many of the cardinals and prelates of the Roman church. Abailard could reckon among his former scholars, twenty cardinals and more than fifty bishops. Such was the fascination of his manner, that he could not even get rid of those whom he wished to dismiss. After embracing the monastic state, he had changed his style and devoted himself wholly to divine subjects: thenceforth he made use of dialectics and philosophy only as a preparatory means of exciting attention, and from that time also he refused to take anything from his scholars.

The reader must not suppose that this enthusiasm, inspired by Abailard, was a novelty in the history of the schools. The epochs which had not witnessed similar examples, were, in fact, distinguished and deplored as forming exceptions; and the intervals between teachers, of different degrees of merit undoubtedly, who attracted

the same love and reverence, were, as we shall soon see, few and brief: in short the desire of intellectual riches played, in the middle ages, nearly the same part as that performed by the love of pleasure in later times; for as the public ways are now periodically thronged with those who, in brilliant equipage, follow dancers from theatre to theatre, as each capital can succeed to attract them with its gold, so used they formerly to witness the humble crowd of those who thirsted after the vision of truth, and who went, through love of it, from school to school, following, and on foot too for the most part, the renowned doctors and teachers of philosophy, who moved from city to city, as each could succeed to win them with its poverty and its love of Christ. How many dusty footed disciples followed Albert the great, who taught at Strasbourg, Ratisbon, Cologne, Paris, and Rome, having the same hearers in each city.

We read in an ancient chronicle of the north, that the nobles of those regions send their sons to Paris, and not only such of them as are to be promoted to clerical orders, but also those who are to be educated in secular things; and that these, being imbued with literature and the idiom of the tongue of that land, not only make great proficiency in arts but also in theology.*

Charles de Bourgueville, after studying at Caen, says that he removed, with some of his companions, to Angers and Poitiers, to pursue his studies successively at these two universities.†

We have a letter from Angelo Politian to John Teixeira, Chancellor of Portugal, giving an account of the progress of his sons, whom he had sent from that distant kingdom to study under him; "You have sent these boys into Italy," he says, "in order that they may be formed to manners, to letters, and to all ingenious arts, befitting the highest fortune: but I believe they brought with them from home paternal manners, so that they do not so much receive as furnish examples. Nothing in them is foolish, nothing vicious, nothing immodest, nothing bad. Theirs is not a shameless front, an elate supercilious brow, a licentious eye, a sharp tongue, an inconstant countenance. Finally, there is nothing in their air, or face, or gait, which can offend. Daily they frequent the churches. Towards their masters they are

* Arn. Lub. iii. 5.

† De Bourgueville *Récherches de Normandie*.

not only assiduous but full of alacrity : they conquer their more learned fellow-disciples in humanity and kindness, and they wholly refrain from associating with those whose manners or fame would injure them. No contest takes place between them except in study, no where are they oftener or more gladly occupied than under the eye of their preceptors, or in the company of their con-disciples."*

The general opinion of the middle ages respecting the advantages which resulted from this custom of visiting different countries for the sake of study, which, indeed, we had occasion to notice in an earlier stage of our inquiry, is expressly adopted by Hugo de St. Victor, and as he tells us, from having himself experienced its truth. "A foreign land," he says, "is conducive to Philosophy. It is a great beginning of virtue for the mind to learn by degrees to change these visible and transitory things, that afterwards it may also relinquish them. He is as yet delicate to whom his country is sweet. He is brave to whom every soil is his country. He is perfect to whom the whole world is a place of exile. The first fixes his love upon the world, the second scatters it, the last extinguishes it. I have been an exile from a boy, and I know with what grief the mind sometimes deserts the narrow space of a poor cottage, with what liberty afterwards it may despise marble courts and golden roofs."† During ages of faith, however, innumerable things conspired to remove the sadness of banishment from the mind of a stranger scholar. The clean of heart could feel at home in every land, for their desires were fixed on God, every where present ; and from the sources of purity and love, they could not be separated.

Strangers were, if possible, loaded with still greater favours than others in the schools of the middle ages. "Felix exilium," exclaims John of Salisbury, alluding to Paris, "cui locus iste datur."‡ Hear how John Vaseus, of Bruges, speaks of his own experience, "Certes the Spaniards received me not as a foreigner, though they are most gracious to foreigners, but as a fellow countryman, and as one too who had deserved well of his country. When I first began to profess publicly at Salamanca, with what zeal did the scholastics interpose with the Rector of the Academy that an

honorary stipend might be decreed to me by the Senate, in which were but three persons opposed to me !"*

In fact, nations contended for the possession of learned men, with an incredible emulation ; all Spain exulted in retaining Dominicus Calagurretanus, the pride of the Palantinian university, Julianus Pomerinus, Joannes Gerundensis, Raymond of Barcelona, Garsias Hispalensis, Vincentius Ferrarius, Alfonso Tostado, Dominicus Soto, Melchior Canus, and others, who were the boast of Salamanca, Ludovicus Vives, the pride of Valentia, and Lupus Herrera, and Laurentius Balbus Liliensis, whom the Complutensian academy presented to the world.† Huber, in his sketches of Spain remarks, "that learned men and philosophers in that country are looked up to as conferring dignity upon their respective provinces. Their acquirements are like a public treasure, only deposited in their hands for the honour of the city, shown to strangers with a kind of patriotic pride, and defended zealously for the advantage of the neighbourhood." The love and study of wisdom seemed even hereditary in many families. The noble house of Sancta Sophia at Padua, produced a continued series of philosophers and illustrious physicians. Such studies gave titles of nobility, as in the case of James Dondo, or Horologio, physician and astrologer, who left that name to his posterity, from having constructed the wondrous clock on the tower of the city. If a ruler in the middle ages could have had such a desire as that of Antoninus Pius, who took upon himself to prescribe the proper numbers, who should apply to each profession in different cities ; he could never have declined determining the number of philosophers, by alleging that Emperor's reason, that, "there were so few who philosophized." The ambition of men of all professions, was then directed to the acquirement of this scholastic or universal wisdom. Lawyers, as well as physicians, were then justly entitled philosophers, as may be witnessed in William Durandus, who was a great poet in the vulgar tongue of Provence, a great theologian, as well as legist and practitioner at the bar ; his *Speculum Juris* having as much authority in law as the Sentences of Peter Lombard had in theology. In fact, as our old English writers upon law observe, the

* Ang. Polit. Epist. Lib. x.

† Hugo S. Victor *Eruditiones Didascalice* Lib. iii. cap. 20.

‡ Joan. Salisb. *Epist.* 24.

* Joannis Vasei Brugensis *Rer. Hispanicarum Chronic.* cap. iii.

† *De Academicis et Doctis Viris Hispanie Narratio* Alfonsi Garsie Prefat.

office of judges was then one of the contemplative life, for they used to sit in court till twelve o'clock, when they dined, and the rest of the day they tell us was devoted to contemplation: The love of wisdom, which belonged to the clean of heart, shone conspicuous in the ranks even of feudal nobility. Jovianus Pontanus says, "that in his old age, after a long life spent in great affairs, he considers it a subject of boast that he had seen such a man as Andrew Matthew Aquaviva, Duke of Adria, who was slain in 1503; a Prince philosophizing in the midst of wars, combining ducal rank and imperial cares, with literary labours, and investigations of nature, both with dignity, neither without its peculiar beauty and praise. This nobleman and philosopher was of such piety that he seemed intent every hour of his life on repairing or building churches, assisting the poor and relieving the oppressed, so that the hereditary piety of the house of Aquaviva, one of the seven principle families of the kingdom of Naples, having been illustrious in the seventh century, and eminent in the crusades, which has given also a martyr to the society of Jesus, seemed

to have attained an increase in him. Amidst all his occupations of learning, for he gave editions of many books, he used to visit monasteries in order to edify his mind by conversations with saints; and many religious houses had splendid proofs of his munificence."*

Reader, here break we off suddenly, for I perceive there approaches to us as if through dim aisles afar, an august procession, which will attract and charm every eye. There are about to pass before us some great shadows of the clean of heart, who, even while on earth beheld God, and who, as philosophers, were deemed wonderful by revering nations.

To hope for a view of all, or for a narrow scrutiny of any, would be inconsistent with the limits allotted for the completion of a course, in which we may not linger; but a hasty glance at some of the most prominent of the sapient throng, for wisdom upon earth, splendours of cherubic light will be attainable with aid of former guides, who have been accustomed to conduct upon this way men of less insight into the spirits that are past with time.

CHAPTER VI.



HE lofty lights which minister to Holy Church have long been passing, when those which illuminated the middle ages came first in view; Justin Martyr, Clemens, Augustin, Gregory, Athanasius, had been followed by an unbroken line of sages, who, on their way to paradise, having had their hearts made pure, philosophized in the school of the cross, diffusing around them beams of a celestial radiance. In combating the early heresies, the Church found the importance of having dialectic force at command, and therefore accepted the service of the Stagyrite. Nemesius, Bishop of Emessa in Phœnicia, in the year 380, followed him in his anthropological writings, and the Roman Boethius in the fifth age, whose work, "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*," written in prison in Pavia, was received with general admiration, kings, as our Alfred, giving versions of it in their respective languages, translated and com-

mentated many of his treatises, as also some of those of Plato and Porphyry. By him was the knowledge of Aristotle propagated in the west. This holy sage, whom Scot Erigena styles *Magnificum Boethium*,* together with Cassiodorus, and other lovers of wisdom of that time, adopted in union, many expressions and thoughts of both Plato and Aristotle. In Spain, under the west Goths, Isidore, Archbishop of Seville, promoted encyclopædical studies through his work on etymologies, as did in England the Venerable Bede, whose learning was prodigious, while his industry and ability were great in all branches of study. In the east an acquaintance with the philosophy of the Greeks was more prevalent. Jacob, of Edessa, translated into Syriac the dialectic writings of Aristotle; the study of whose philosophy was also greatly promoted by the writings of John Philoponus,

* Paul Ant. de Tarsia *Hist. Cupersanensium*, Lib. ii.
+ De Div. Nat. l. 56.

and of St. John Damascene.* In the fifth century science began to decay in France, nor did it revive till the time of Charlemagne, yet in this fifth age we find not a small number of great and learned men in every department, theologians, philosophers, historians, mathematicians, physicians, poets, and orators. Although in the fifth and sixth centuries, after the infusion of the Germanic barbarians into Gaul, there was little spirit of original inquiry, we have great characters, presenting the high personality belonging to an heroic race. The whole history of this period is comprised in the biographies of saintly bishops and priests, the heroes of Christianity, of that time, who, in believing, nourished such a flame of holy love, that all the world still re-echoes with their praise. The literature also of that period consists chiefly in these biographies, for Christianity had penetrated so deeply into the human nature that all things were in life. The times were too stormy, indeed, for the study of philosophy to make much progress; but great and pious and heroic men abounded: they had no leisure or inclination to speculate—they held the Christian truth more in the unity of sentiment and feeling than in the defensive form of science. Glorious bishops and lights benign of this period, were Remi of Rheims, Avitus of Vienna, Rurich of Limoges, Cæsarius of Arles, Eleutherus of Tournai, Cyprian of Toulon, Ferreolus of Uzes, Germain of Paris, Viventolus of Lyons, Nicetus of Treves, Marius of Avench, Pretextatus of Rouen, Veronus of Cavaillon, Gregory of Tours, and Fortunatus of Poitiers.† The Church had yielded the elect during eight centuries, when the great spirits which are now about to pass before us as representatives of the clean of heart beholding God, came forth to sanctify and guide the world.

In surveying the history of the philosophy of the middle ages from the year 800 till the seventeenth century, we find that there are certain epochs easily determinable, which must guide us in the order of observation. To the first period, which Tennemann distinguished as that which felt the reign of pure realism, belong the many splendours which here come into view, whose radiance we discerned from a distance, while observing in a former book those, who, through meekness, possessed the intellectual

riches of the earth. Alcuin, or Albin, whose name alone is sufficient to disprove the opinions of those, who speak of the darkness of that age is the first of the majestic figures in this procession. York, in 736, beheld his birth—Parma, while he was travelling to Rome with Sanbald, his Archbishop, his first interview with Charlemagne, who there invited and persuaded him to reside in his kingdom. On his removal thither, he was accompanied by some of his scholars, as assistants in teaching the Trivium and Quadrivium, of whom Wizo, Fædegisus, Agobard, and Sigulf, are specified. When the schools were established, Alcuin had among other disciples three brethren of the imperial house, Adelhard, Bernarius, and Wala, sons of Bernhard, the brother of Pepin; the first was Abbot of Corby, and was succeeded by his brother Wala. Not so learned as Bede, though, perhaps, a more profound thinker, he is decidedly after him the first remarkable man of the Germanic Christian world, and the soul of all the noble enterprises of Charlemagne for the civilization of the west. He evinced no great speculative talent—his efforts being all directed to practical Christianity; his chief work of a different nature was his treatise *De Ratione Animæ*, which he dedicated to Gundrada, a sister of the Abbot Adelhard and a relation of the Emperor.

Among the eminent disciples grouped around him, we may distinguish Raban Maur, afterwards Abbot of Fulda, and Archbishop Mainz, in which city he was born in 776, who introduced Alcuin's dialectics into Germany; Hatto, who succeeded Raban at Fulda; Samuel, a master in the same abbey, then Abbot of Lorsch, and finally Bishop of Worms; Haimon, Bishop of Halberstadt; Adelbert, Abbot of Ferrieres, and Aldrich, Archbishop of Sens. The rest belong to the great schools of the ninth century, which were Fulda, St. Gall, Reichenau, in the diocese of Constance, Hirschau, in that of Spire, and Corbie in Piccardy; which were all the centres of other schools. Paschasius Radbert, Adelhard the younger, Hildemann, and Odo, Warin, founder of new Corby, and Anscharius, the Apostle of the North, were all from Corby in Piccardy. The throng which follows is composed of the eminent philosophers of the ninth age: these are Bertold, the monk of Mici; Jonas, Bishop of Orleans; the Holy Smaragdus; Frothar, Bishop of Toul; Walafrid Strabo, Abbot of Reichenau; Freulf, Bishop of Lisieux; Ebbon, Archbishop of Rheims; Amolon, Archbishop of Lyons; Liutbert, Abbot of

* Tennemann *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*.

† Staudenmaier, *Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit*. I.

Hirschau; Andradus, chorbishop of Sens; Aldrich, bishop of Mans; Probus, monk of St. Alban's; Florus diaconus, Prudentius, bishop of Troyes, and John Scot Erigena, for whose birth-place three kingdoms contended. This slender figure of stature very diminutive is he. Tennemann concludes, that Ireland—Staudenmaier, that England gave him birth. Brought into France by Charles le Chauve, whose court he afterwards left, and as some say, by constraint, on account of the offence which was taken at certain opinions, or at the too subtle manner of his philosophizing, he finally returned to England, where he died, according to some at Oxford in 886, while the more common belief is, that he was murdered by some scholars at Malmesbury, in proof of which his epitaph is cited; for at one time on his tomb these lines were inscribed,

*"Conditus hoc tumulo sanctus Sophista Johannes,
Qui ditatus erat vivens jam dogmate miro;
Martyrio tandem meruit conscendere cælum,
Quo semper cuncti regnant per sæcula sancti."*

William of Malmesbury relates, "that the monks venerated his bones almost as much as those of St. Aldelm." In fact, Anastasius, in his letter to Charles the Bald, styles him "*virum per omnia sanctum*." The constant tradition of the middle ages, till Mabillon wrote, was that Erigena had been called to England from the court of Charles the Bald, by Alfred, that he taught in Oxford, and was slain at Malmesbury by revolted scholars. Staudenmaier supposes, that he owed the name Erigena to his having only studied in Ireland, while another recent historian is convinced that his writings furnish intrinsic evidence that he was Irish born. What we know with certainty, however, respecting him, is the extent of his learning, which included the oriental tongues, his love for the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, and the importance which he ascribed to philosophy in general, as the knowledge of the grounds of all things. Scot, notwithstanding his unhappy rashness, had a clear penetrating intelligence, but along with that acuteness, which made him the chief of dialecticians, he united a deep interior religious feeling, so that his mysticism is as remarkable as his dialectics. His life was spent in contemplation, while his manners were spotless and pure; his activity was exercised in speculative theology: through his influence and example the study of the Greek philosophy became prevalent in the

west. His opinion respecting Plato* and Aristotle, has been mentioned before; the Fathers he prized immensely, especially Dionysius the Areopagite, to whose view was shown clearest the nature and the ministry angelical while yet in flesh he dwelt; him he styled, "*magnum et divinum manifestatorem*;" and by means of his translation of the work on the celestial Hierarchy, a fountain of mysticism was opened for the middle ages. Alluding to St. Gregory Nazianzen and his commentator Maximus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustin, he says, "it is not for us to judge the intelligence of the holy fathers, but to receive them piously with veneration, yet we are not forbidden to choose that which may seem most consonant with the divine language."

Unhappily he laid too much stress upon the subtleties of human philosophy. William of Malmesbury says, "that his great work *De Divisione Naturæ* on account of its solving the perplexity of some questions, is very useful, if we pardon his deviating in some things from the Latins, while fixing his eyes intensely upon the Greeks; therefore, he has been thought heretical; and Florus wrote against him, for, in fact, there are in this work many things, which, unless they were diligently discussed, might seem abhorrent from the faith of Catholics."† This work, in the form of a dialogue between a master and his pupil, was the first philosophic and theological system seen in the west. As in the thirteenth century, the Albigenses thought fit to pretend that it favoured their opinions, though it is clear they did not understand it, and as at all events it opened a dangerous door for the pride of human reason, Pope Honorius III. caused all copies of it to be sought for and burnt. His work on the Eucharist has been long lost, and the critical researches respecting it have only rendered the nature of its contents more undiscoverable. Paschasius Radbert, monk at Corby in Piccardy, and in 844, after the deposition of Wala, Abbot of that cloister, sent to the monks of the recently founded abbey of New Corby, in Germany, a treatise on the mystery of the Eucharist, in which he seemed anxious to elevate faith to knowledge. In this respect, Staudenmaier thinks that he opened a way to the perverse, and some suppose that Scot merely wrote against certain expressions in that work, and that it was not his intention to teach any doctrine, but that which the Church has always held.

* *De Divis. Nat. i. 33.*

† *In Lib. v.*

Fredegard, a monk of Corby, was the first to take offence at Radbert's work, and thirty years after a controversy arose respecting it, in which Raban Maur, Matramnus, Erigena, Haimo, and an unknown writer took part; but what opinion Erigena held we cannot discover. It is more improbable than probable, that his work still existed in the eleventh century, and that it was really his work which Berenger cited as his.* It was at all events condemned at the council of Vercelli in 1050, and at Paris, under King Henry the First, but the person of Scot has been always held in respect, as his errors were without pertinacity. "In no manner," says Staudenmaier, "did he evince indifference to the Church in his researches, but on the contrary, he more than all things loved and prized it; so that his errors are not to be ascribed to his will, but to the strong passion for knowledge, which can mislead men when they pursue objects with impetuosity, from particular points of view."† The ancient writers invariably mention him with a certain affection, "Potuit errare," say they, "hæreticus esse noluit." Throughout the middle ages his memory was cherished, as one entitled to esteem and respect, perhaps, however, chiefly on the ground of his translations. He had the glory of having Hugo of St. Victor for his commentator, and of having his writings frequently mentioned by Richard of St. Victor, who evinced a familiar acquaintance with them.

Now, if the mind's eye pass from light to light, further on and still within this first great family, we may distinguish the deep discerning Gerbert, monk of Aurillac, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., who studied at Seville and Cordova, and taught in the schools of Bobbio, Rheims, Aurillac, Tours, and Sens: then follows the hallowed spirit of Lanfranc, born at Pavia, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. "To know all the admirable talents and genius of Lanfranc," says Orderic Vitalis, "one ought to be Herodian in grammar, Aristotle in dialectics, Cicero in rhetoric, Augustin and Jerome, or some other doctor of the law and of grace in the Holy Scriptures. Athens in her glory would have honoured Lanfranc, and would have desired to be instructed by his wise precepts."‡ With him we must notice the Cardinal Peter Damian, from Ravenna, whose skilful use of dialectics in theology was called for by the heretical pub-

lication of Berenger. This jewel that is next, lustrous and costly, which great renown hath left, and not to perish, is St. Anselm, the disciple of Lanfranc, a light to marvel at, born at Aosta, in Piemont, elected prior and abbot of Bec, and afterwards archbishop of Canterbury; he was called by his contemporaries the second Augustin, in regard to the penetration and dialectic skill with which he pursued religious philosophy. His "Monologium or Exemplum Meditandi de Ratione Fidei," is a work in which he unites the learning of God and of divine things with the grounds and principles of natural reason. Of extensive erudition, but still more distinguished for his dialectic power, comprehensive in his views, and as remarkable for acuteness, clear in his conceptions, and connected in all his reasonings, St. Anselm laid the foundation of the scholastic metaphysics. Albericus says, in his Chronicle of the year 1060, "that philosophy came to the Gauls in the days of the illustrious men, Lanfranc and Anselm." Hildebert of Lavardin, archbishop of Tours, stands next after Anselm in acuteness and dialectic ability; but he is thought to have excelled him in clearness and harmonious cultivation of mind. He united a singular mental cultivation, familiarity with the classics, independence, taste, and sound practical understanding; his *Tractatus Theologicus*, often ascribed to Hugo of St. Victor, and his *Moralis Philosophia*, formed the first popular system of theology. More versed in mysticism were those we next see, — Othlo, a monk in the cloister of S. Emmeran, in 1090, and Honorius of Autun, near Basel, who were inclined to the Neoplatonic Augustinian theology. Now come into view the great luminaries of the second period of the scholastic philosophy, comprising the contest between nominalism and realism, from Roscellin, at the end of the eleventh century, till Alexander of Hales. The use of dialectics, and especially the explanation of Porphyry's Commentary upon Aristotle's *Organon*, *περί πρώτης φωνῆς*; the various meanings of the Platonic and Aristotelian schools respecting metaphysics, gave rise to the division of nominalist and realist, which partly following Plato, partly Aristotle, conduced to the further exercise of dialectic acuteness; this began with John Roscellin, a Breton by birth, and a canon of Compiègne or of Beauvais, in 1089, who maintained that general ideas were nothing but names or words, *flatus vocis*. This led him to an heretical interpretation of the Trinity, which he was obliged to recant at Soissons

* Laufs Theol. Studien. and Kritiken. I. 755—80.

† John Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit.

‡ Hist. Nor. Lib. iv.

in 1092, having, in addition to his misfortunes, suffered himself to calumniate Lanfranc, Anselm, and Robert d'Arbrissel.*

The scholastics divide this controversy into the two heads of *universalia ante rem*, and the *universalia in re* or *post rem*. To show the manner in which the general was involved in the individual, stood forth the celebrated dialectician, William de Champeaux, who died in 1120 as bishop of Chalons, with his scholar and adversary, Peter Abailard, of the school of Paris. The latter was a grammarian, orator, poet, musician, philosopher, theologian, mathematician, jurisconsult; he knew five or six languages, he played on instruments, he was ignorant of nothing in history, sacred or profane. It is consoling to know that, if the first period of his life shows him dark and turbulent, the last beheld him amongst the cleansed, reflecting beams of the celestial vision. Some, perhaps, through a fond desire of defending him throughout, have asserted that jealousy first incited Alberic and Lotulphe to send his book, "Introduction to Theology," as heretical, before the archbishop of Rheims, who, on their representation, invited Conon, bishop of Palestina, the pope's legate, to assist at the council about to be held at Soissons. Abailard was summoned to appear there and answer for his opinions respecting the Trinity, which he had attempted to explain by natural reason. So exasperated was the public mind against him, that, on his arrival, his person was not thought quite secure from popular violence. After appearing before the legate, who was a mild and holy man but not a deep scholastic, the matter was referred to the archbishop of Rheims, who, being of similar character to the legate, referred it to his theologians, who, as some remark, were the personal rivals of Abailard. Yet Alberic and Lotulphe were unable to fix upon any sentence of the book that could be produced in evidence before a council, so they demanded that the fathers should proceed with other affairs, postponing this question to the last, but as the legate gave permission to Abailard to preach before the people during this interval, the public mind became quite changed in his regard, and he was now the object of general admiration.

On the last day of the council the legate declared that he should be absolved and dismissed. Geofroi, bishop of Chartres, a man of eminent piety and learning, made a noble discourse in his favour, in which he

reminded the assembly that all great geniuses are exposed to envy, and recommended, either that Abailard should be permitted to speak in his own defence, or else that he should be sent back to his abbey of St. Denis, where a greater number of doctors might be assembled, and more time allowed to come to a decision on a question of such importance. The contrary opinion however prevailed, and the assembly judged, that his having taught and published without express permission, was enough to warrant his condemnation. Geofroi of Chartres saw the danger, and being unable to ward it off, withdrew.

Abailard was cited to come forward—a brazier stood in the midst. It was announced to him that he was required to burn his book with his own hands; at the same time it was presented to him, and he, without uttering a word, threw it into the fire. The assistants were astonished at such a proceeding, and upon a certain prelate wishing to excuse it, saying that there were such and such expressions in the book, Terricus, an able theologian, smiled and repeated some words from the creed of St. Athanasius, which justified the sentence.

Abailard, being condemned, was committed to the hands of the abbot of St. Medard, of Soissons, and the assembly broke up, to the great vexation of his friends, who intimated that the injustice was so palpable, and the neglect of formalities so uncanonical, that no importance was attached to the decision. Abailard, it is said, felt this stroke more keenly than his former punishment, of which he acknowledged the justice, but he was now in the hands of the best of men: the abbot and monks of St. Medard left nothing untried to console him. They assured him that the late proceedings would not injure him, and, in fact, the legate immediately restored him to liberty and permitted him to return to St. Denis.

His books continued to be read by all the world, and it was not till after many years that the dispute was resumed, first by a Benedictine monk, Guillaume, abbot of St. Thierry, near Rheims, the intimate friend of St. Bernard. This man, on reading the work, was offended at certain passages, and immediately referred it to Geoffrey, bishop of Chartres, and to St. Bernard. To his letter, which was passionate, the bishop made no answer, and St. Bernard replied in very few words, that delay was necessary, and that this was the first intimation he had heard of the kind. Unfortunately the bishop died in the interim, and Guillaume presented

* Longuevalle Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. viii.

a list of heretical errors which he thought could be drawn from the work, which list St. Bernard read. Being moved with zeal for religion, he first went to Abailard and warned him secretly, but not finding full satisfaction he returned, with two or three witnesses, and still found a man inflexible and resolved to defend himself. Soon after this St. Bernard wrote to the Pope, Innocent II., denouncing him as a dangerous person, and in league with Arnold of Brescia. It is to be lamented that such an opinion should have been entertained on the credit of this treatise of Guillaume, for Abailard had no connexion whatever with Arnold, and throughout his writings not a word could ever be found disrespectful towards the Holy See.

There was to be a great assembly held at Sens, in 1140, on occasion of the translation of certain relics, and Abailard thought that this would be a proper occasion, to justify himself, for which purpose he wrote to Henry, the archbishop of Sens, complaining of the abbot of Clairvaux, and requesting permission to meet him in person, before the council, and to defend himself. The archbishop acceded and wrote to St. Bernard inviting him to attend. St. Bernard, but for the remonstrance of his friends, would have declined engaging in this public dispute, on the ground of not being accustomed to scholastic arguments, and of not thinking it right to have the mysteries of faith made an object of discussion ; but he at length consented, and went to the council, relying only on the justice of his intentions, and on the help which he expected from God. The assembly was most august. The King Louis-le-jeune, Guillaume Count of Nevers, Thibaut Count Palatine, the archbishop of Sens and Rheims, with several other bishops, and a multitude of learned doctors were present. St. Bernard, as the aggressor, spoke first, but before he had finished, Abailard, to the astonishment of all, without attempting a defence, said aloud that he appealed to Rome. His friends gave out that this unexpected resolution arose from his fearing that the influence of St. Bernard, and of the previous accusations brought against him, would have necessarily led to his condemnation. The council was embarrassed, but as he had chosen it for judge, it selected fourteen propositions from those of which he was accused, and condemned them, but without comprising his person in the sentence.

His friends failed not to observe that none of the precautions were taken which are

always observed by canonical councils in condemning a point of doctrine, since no time was allowed for consulting the holy fathers, and for deliberating in particular congregations, and hearing opinions, before submitting the question to the prelates. They pretended also that there was no care evinced to discover whether he really taught such errors ; most of them, it is said, are no where found in his writings ; but before the invention of printing it was easy to be deceived, for copyists often made an author say the contrary of what he intended, by omitting a letter, or stop, or point of interrogation. Mezerai remarks also, that St. Bernard, whose natural eloquence nourished only, as he said himself, amidst rocks and forests, animated with the Spirit of God, was far more powerful than the vain rhetoric of the schools, was drawn on to speak and write against Abailard, more through aversion for scholastic disputes, and with a view to show the danger of subtilties, than from any other cause.

Abailard retired from Sens, and wrote two apologies containing his profession of faith. He declared that he had never wished to be a philosopher opposed to the great Apostle, or had set more value upon being a second Aristotle, as he was styled, than on being a Christian, which he was by the grace of Jesus Christ. He remarks that it is difficult to write much without exposing oneself to censure ; and he protests that he is ready to renounce whatever opinion may be found contrary to the Church, whose son he is, and from whose unity he prays that he may be never separated. He was about to set out for Rome, to defend his cause, when he received intelligence that he had been already condemned. After great perplexity and wavering, he resolved, trusting to the sincerity of his intentions, upon continuing his journey to defend himself in person before the Holy See ; but having stopped for a night at Cluny, he was induced to abandon this resolution, by the advice of Peter the Venerable, who undertook to bring the affair to a happy issue. This learned and holy abbot, who had long admired him by reputation, was now filled with delight on observing the beauty of his genius and the depth of his understanding. It was he who gave this testimony of him : " Non homini, sed scientiæ deest quod nescivit." Still more was he charmed with the piety which he joined to his extraordinary abilities, and with the proofs which his conversation furnished, that he loved only God, and wished to love no other

but him. He now promised to deliver him from all his afflictions, on condition that he would remain at Cluny for the rest of his life. Finding him at a loss and perplexed, he took him by the hand and led him into a more secret chamber; and there, sitting down, said, "Hear me a little: what do you leave in quitting this stormy scene? You will find new calumniators; you will be always in disputes and combats, either attacking, or defending yourself. Is such a life conducive to salvation? and is it not time, at sixty years of age, to renounce every thing but the great affair of eternity? Believe me, my dear Abailard it is Providence who has conducted you here to find repose for your last days; and do not suppose that you will be useless: my brethren will profit by your learning, and will regard you as their master. Here you will have no one to envy you, and here you can close your tumultuous life in sweet heavenly peace." The philosopher was won;—for him was about to commence gladness everlasting. Peter the Venerable wrote to the pope; but in the interim a happy incident occurred, in the arrival of Rainard, abbot of Cîteaux, and general of the order, a man of eminent piety and learning, who had a few years before succeeded St. Stephen. He was the son of Milon, count of Bar-sur-Seine, and he came mounted on a sorry horse, with one poor brother for all his suite. It is thought that he came at the desire of St. Bernard, to speak to Abailard of reconciliation; at least the abbot of Cluny employed him for the purpose, and sent Abailard under his conduct to Clairvaux, where they arrived at the end of September, 1140, four months after the council of Sens. Abailard explained on what ground he had advanced the propositions; and the saint was so convinced of the purity of his faith, that they both embraced and vowed an eternal friendship. Peter the Venerable testified the utmost joy, and, in order to inform the pope of what had passed, sent two of his monks to Rome with letters from himself and from Abailard. In these he assured him that the latter had renounced for ever the disputes of the schools, and that the whole community of Cluny prostrated itself at the feet of his holiness, to beseech him to approve of his remaining in that monastery to the end of his life. The pope granted this permission, and expressed joy at such an issue of so unhappy a debate; and thus ended the troubles of this great man, who may perhaps have been treated with undue severity, considering the service which he rendered at the time by

his writings against the Petrobrusians, Jacobites, Cathari, Henricians, Adanites, and other monstrous sects; though his warmest advocates admit that he ought, for the sake of peace, to have been content to speak the usual language when he held the common doctrine; for it is allowed that he expressed himself, on some points, in a new and unguarded manner; and that some of the propositions which he really held were erroneous and untenable; but no man was ever farther from having the obstinacy and pride of a heretic, since he constantly confessed an inviolable attachment and perfect submission to the authority of the Holy See.

On receiving the abbot of Cluny's letter, the pope testified his joy, sent absolution to Abailard, and reinstated him in all his rights and prerogatives; and from that time his life was spent in exercises of piety and preparation for his end. Peter the Venerable, alluding to his subsequent conduct, said that there was never greater nakedness in St. Martin, or more humility in St. Germain. In his room were only a pallet, with table and chair, a wooden candlestick, and a crucifix. The Holy Scriptures, and some treatises of the Fathers, formed all his library. His manner was that of the lowest brother in the community. When charged to give instructions, he spoke only of humility and contempt of the world. It was already a citizen of heaven who spoke the language of the celestial country. Attacked with a cutaneous disorder, the abbot, by advice of physicians, sent him for change of air to the priory of St. Marcel, near Châlons-sur-Saône, and only three or four leagues distant from Cluny; but the keenness of that air, by affording him temporary relief, only hastened his dissolution. On being seized with fever, he knew that it announced his end. After a devout preparation, he expired on the 21st of April, 1142, in the sixty-third year of his age. Peter the Venerable, in the epitaph which he wrote for him, after describing the multiplicity of his knowledge and the subtilty of his genius, added,—

"—— sed tunc magis omnia vicit
Cum Cluniacensem monachum, moremque professus,
Ad Christi veram transivit philosophiam."

This history has detained us long, but it was well to ascertain the facts relative to a name so illustrious, and which is often made use of for purposes of hostility. The crowd which now presses forward consists of his disciples, of which the foremost are William de Conches and Guilbert de la Porre, bishop of Poitiers, and of their opponents—far

greater spirits—Hugo of St. Victor, his illustrious disciple Richard of St. Victor, Hugo of Amiens, archbishop of Rouen, the two Englishmen—Robert Pulleyn and Robert Folioth of Melun, Peter of Novara the Lombard, and bishop of Paris, his disciple Peter of Poitiers, who died archbishop of Embrun in 1205, and, though last not least, Alanus de Insulis, entitled Doctor Universalis, who died in 1203.

Hugo of St. Victor was by birth a Saxon, of the family of the Counts of Blankenburg and Regenstein, in the Hartz Forest. He was born in 1097, and educated in the monastery at Halberstadt, founded by his uncle Reinhard, bishop of that see.* In his eighteenth year he removed to St. Victor in Paris, where he remained till his death, in the forty-fourth year of his age. Of him we shall often have occasion to speak. Richard, endowed by nature with still greater genius, was the dearest friend and scholar of Hugo of St. Victor, and he died as prior of that monastery in 1173. Alanus de Insulis was of immense renown in the university of Paris, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Of him, too, is related a memorable legend, which ancient painters may have rendered familiar to the lovers of their art. He had proposed, on a certain day, to preach on the blessed Trinity, and to give a perfect knowledge of that mystery to his auditors. On the preceding day, as he took a solitary walk on the margin of the stream, he saw a little boy scooping out a small trench, and trying to fill it with water from a shell which escaped through the sandy bottom of the trench as fast as he filled it. "What are you doing, my sweet child?" asked Alanus. "I am going to put all the water of the river into my trench," was the reply. "And when do you think," continued the philosopher, "that you will succeed in this grand design?" "I shall succeed before you will perform what you have engaged to do." "What have I engaged, child?" "Why you said that to-morrow you would, in a sermon, explain the Trinity by your science." Alanus, at this reply, was seized with compunction and terror. He returned home in deep meditation, pondering upon the words so strangely addressed to him, and lamenting bitterly his own presumption. On the morrow, when the hour of the sermon arrived, a great crowd being assembled, Alanus mounted the pulpit, and, instead of a theme, uttered these words: "Sufficiat vobis vidisse Alanum:" and immediately descending,

* Liebner, Hugo von S. Victor und die Red. Richtungen seiner Zeit.

withdrew, leaving the people lost in astonishment. The same day he left Paris and travelled into Burgundy, where he repaired to the abbey of Citeaux and offered himself as a poor lay brother to be a shepherd, and there he remained for a long time unknown. After many years, when the abbot Peter was about to set out for Rome to attend the council, this poor servant asked permission to accompany him, saying that he would take charge of his horses. The abbot consented, and they arrived at Rome together. On the day of the great disputation, when the abbot was proceeding to the council, Alanus, being still at his side, asked whether he might enter along with him; but the abbot, in reply, told him to return to the stable and attend to the horses, saying that none but bishops and abbots and great clerks were admitted; but he entreated him to suffer him to glide in disguised at his side; and the abbot consenting, he passed and sat down at his feet, and heard the disputation with the Albigenses and Waldenses. The heretics appearing at one moment to triumph, Alanus rose and said to the abbot, "Jube Domine benedicere;" to whom the other replied in amaze, "Madman, what art thou doing?" Then again he said meekly, "Jube Domine benedicere;" and repeated these words thrice, till the pope, observing what passed, called upon him to speak; when he began with such perspicacity and force of dialectics to confute the heretics, that immediately the error became evident to every one present. "Aut diabolus es aut Alanus!" exclaimed the furious disputant, finding himself worsted. "Non sum ego diabolus sed Alanus," calmly replied the stranger. Thus was he discovered; and who can describe the scene which then took place? The abbot would have resigned his dignity to him on the spot, and the Pope Alexander wished to confer great honours upon him; but he refused them all, and returned to his abbey. It was decreed, however, that he should have always two clerks under him to write down what he might dictate, and there he made many books; amongst them that which begins "Phœbo Phœbe," and a commentary on the prophecies of Merlin. Alanus died, and was buried in that abbey, and on his tomb were these verses:—

"Alanum brevis hora brevi tumultu sepelivit,
Qui duo, qui septem, totam sibi subdidit orbem.
Labentis sæcli contemptis rebus egena fit,
Mille ducenteno nonageno quoque quarto
Christo devotus mortales exiit artus."*

* Buleus, Hist. Univers. Paris. tom. ii.

Amidst thousands of splendours now presented, we can but seek to distinguish few by name whose light still gilds our stormy scene on earth. The work of Peter Lombard obtained for him the title of Master of the Sentences. It was a classified compilation from the fathers, which became the text book and model for subsequent theologians. The university of Paris celebrated every year his anniversary, as its founder, in the church of St. Marcel, where his bones reposed. Petrus Comestor, author of the Scholastic History, and Galterus, who wrote the poem on the life of Alexander, were his contemporaries; but what have extorted the admiration of modern philosophers were the humane and philosophic mind of Hugo of St. Victor, who was also styled the second Augustin, the philosophic penetration and mysticism of Richard of St. Victor, the copious and lucid classification of Pulleyn, comprising both dogmas and truths of reason, and the exact mathematical applications of Alanus.

We must not suffer to pass here unobserved the eternal light of Siebert, a monk of Gemblou in the diocese of Liege born in 1030. Gemblou was an abbey, famous for its studies and its library. He wrote in prose and verse, knew Greek and Hebrew, possessed a universal science, and was withal of most holy life—*morum probitate et scientiæ multiplicitate laudabilis*. Monks and clerks flocked to his lectures in the school of St. Vincent at Metz, whence he finally returned to his abbey of Gemblou. As his diocese was most attached to the emperors, he could not avoid taking part in the controversy which then divided Europe; but he was careful to recognise for the successors of St. Peter those whom the church received as such; and though he wrote some things in his Chronicle little to the honour of some sovereign pontiffs, he relates with impartiality the vices and errors on the other side, sparing not the emperor. Siebert was loved by all the learned of his time, and respected even by the Jews during his residence at Metz. He died in the abbey of Gemblou, and his obit is thus inscribed in the tables of that house: "*Dominus Siebertus venerabilis monachus, Gemblœcensis Cænobii, vir in omni scientia literarum, incomparabilis ingenii, descriptor præcedentium temporum.*"* Baronius, however, and Bulæus, convict him of some errors.† The ornaments with which he enriched his

abbey were acquired by the voluntary liberality of those whom he instructed.

The religious philosophy gained by the writings of these wondrous men; and the supernatural school, as Tennemann styles it, was every where triumphant, under its chiefs St. Bernard and Walter, abbot of St. Victor, who composed his celebrated book, *Contra Quatuor Labyrinthos Galliæ*. John of Salisbury, or Johannes Parvus Salisberiensis, the disciple of Abailard, is one who also claims especial notice. He became bishop of Chartres. An admirer of Aristotle, and deeply versed in classical learning, he saw, also, the faults of the philosophic studies of his time, the occasional abuse of dialectics in the pursuit of minute and useless questions, which eventually led Simon of Tournay, Almaric of Bene, in the diocese of Chartres, and his disciple David of Dinanto, to adopt errors destructive of faith, bordering upon a kind of pantheism, to which they may have been led by an injudicious use of the writings of Scotus Erigena.* But this abuse had the the good effects of leading to greater caution, and to more insight into the danger of misusing reason.

The third period, the exclusive reign of Realism, commenced in 1240, with the writings of Alexander of Hales, at the moment when to human eyes there was every probability of its decline and overthrow. The Aristotelian philosophy was destined now to play a great part in the schools. Hermannus Contractus, the monk of St. Gall, was not the first commentator or translator of the Stagyrte in the west; for a hundred years before him Reinhard, scholastic in the abbey of St. Burchard in Wirzburg, had laboured in that capacity.† His writings had been diffused in the west, in the time of Charlemagne, from Constantinople through the Greeks, and subsequently from Spain through the Moors. The love of knowledge and science which distinguished the Arabians had been greatly encouraged and promoted by the caliphs of the houses of Abasside, Al Mansur, Al Mohdi, Harun Al Raschid, contemporary of Charlemagne, Al Mamun, and Moteassem, by means of translating Greek authors and founding schools and libraries. Aristotle, in spite of the authority of the Koran, had directed all their studies of philosophy, under the guid-

* Gerson de Concordia *Metaphysicæ cum Logica*, p. 14. S. Thom. Aq. in *Lib. Sent. ii. dist. 17. q. 1. a. 1.* Alberti Sum. i. p. Tract. iv. q. 20. vi. 29. xviii. 70.

† Heeren *Gesch. d. Class. Lit. im Mittelalter*, i. 226.

* Hist. Lit. de la France, ix.

† Hist. Univers. Paris. tom. ii. 41.

ance of Avicenna and Averroes, whose commentaries, however, had nearly superseded the original. The latter seems to have considered the Koran only as a religion for the people, which did not supersede the necessity for a more scientific system for the learned. The philosophy of the Arabians became known to the Christians chiefly through the Jews, who at that time played no unimportant part in the learned world, as the example of Moses Maimonides of Cordova can bear witness. These learned Jews translated the Arabic writings into Hebrew, from which Latin versions were soon formed, which circulated in the universities of Europe. The first translator of Arabic writings was the monk Constantine, named Africanus from the country of his birth. After many long journeys through the east, and strange varieties of fate, he at length sought and found eternal rest in the abbey of Monte Cassino, where he made known the results of his wanderings, and published translations of the medicinal works of the Arabs, and by these were the works of Hippocrates and Galen made known to the west. This was in the middle of the eleventh century. Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., was another who greatly contributed to propagate the Arabic learning in the Christian world. Then followed Robertus Retinensis, Herman of Dalmatia, Plato Tiburtinus, Alfred and Daniel of Morlay, Aurelius, Eugenius Ammiratus, Philip and Mark, the Archdeacon Dominic Gondisalvi, and the converted Jew John Avendeath, known as Joannes Hispalensis. Great encouragement was given to the two last by Raimund, archbishop of Toledo, who made a plan to translate the philosophic writings of the Arabians into Latin, and employed them for that purpose. Then were published, accordingly, works of Avicenna, Algazelis, Alpharbius, and some others, of which the book *Fons Vitæ* was celebrated in the thirteenth century. Gerard of Cremona now published four original works and translated twenty-two others, and died in 1187. From the year 1100 to 1200 the literature of the Arabs was especially cultivated by the English.* In the eleventh century an Arabian Chronicle was translated into Latin by an Englishman who had studied on the banks of the Ebro. The same zeal drew Adelard of Bath to the Peninsula. In the twelfth century we find the names of three Englishmen capable of translating from the Arabic. In

* Buleus, *Hist. Univ. Par. ii.*

the thirteenth appear as translators Roger Bacon, Grossetête, and the renowned Michael Scot: the former, in his *Opus Majus*, shows as familiar acquaintance with Albumazar, Averroes, Avicenna, Alfarabius, Thabeti, ben Corah, Hali, Alhacen, Alkinali, Alfragan, Arzachel, and other Arabic writers, as with Aristotle himself. Hugo of St. Victor, in his letter to the bishop of Seville, Alvarus of Cordova, and also Pope Innocent III., writing to King Alfonso X., complain of the ardour for studying the Saracenic literature. This monarch, as also the Norman princes of Sicily and Italy, were now its great patrons. The former collected more than fifty learned men from Toledo, Cordova, and Paris, and set them to translate the works of Ptolemy and others. The names of these men were, Judas son of Moses, Judas named Alcohan, Moses, John Daspasso, Ferdinand of Toledo, Bernard of Burgos, the Rabbi Zag, John of Messena, John of Cremona, and Abraham. They translated these works into Spanish, from which, subsequently, Latin versions were made. Herman Alemannus, in the thirteenth century, published the *Ethics* of Aristotle from the Arabic in 1240, as Robert Grossetête of Lincoln had published them from the Greek.

The first scholastic philosopher who made great use of the Arabic learning was Alexander of Hales, who comes now before us. He was of a monastery in Gloucestershire, and surnamed doctor *irrefragabilis*; he learned theology in Paris, and illustrated in a summa theologiæ the text-book of Peter Lombard, with acute syllogistic reasoning upon the opposite doctrines; in which he was opposed by William of Auvergne, bishop of Paris. He was the first to write a commentary on the *Master of the Sentences*; but the mystic was no less admirable than the scholastic side of his character. The historian of the Minors demands what could have induced this wondrous philosopher to enter the order of St. Francis, then in its infancy? The reply will indicate how justly he is numbered among the clean of heart; for it was in consequence of his being once exhorted to consider whether he ought not for the love of Mary to embrace poverty; and, as it was his rule never to refuse any thing asked in her name, he resolved to do so. His death was in 1245. He was buried in the church opposite the crucifix. Over his grave was his image sculptured, and under it this inscription:—

"Gloria Doctorum, decus et flos philosophorum,
Auctor scriptorum, vir Alexander, variorum,
Norma modernorum, fons veri, lux aliorum,
Inclytus Anglorum Archilevita, sed horum
Spretor cunctorum, Fratrum collega Minorum
Factus egenorum, fit primus Doctor eorum."

In a tablet in the wall are added these verses:—

"Quid tibi majorum repetis monumenta per orbem?"

Patris Alexandri gesta, viator, habe.
Hic, placito superum prognatus gente Britanna,
Protinus a puero flexit ad astra gradum.
Non gaze meministi, nec avorum rura licetur,
Pectore in eximio sola Minerva sedet.
Ergo freta emensus, et vastos æquoris amnes,
Se totum ad studium Parisiense tulit.
Quo vel Socraticos, vel summos quoque Platonos,
Ingenio facile dexteriore præit.
Inde solum, et cœlos, et quæ super astra geruntur
Rimatus, didicit abdita fata Dei.
Et tandem, et meritis et digna laude probatus,
Doctrinæ et verbi fit sator atque pater.
Magnus Alexander, cui mens persancta fuisset
Ac devota diu, et religiosa Deo:
Iste ego (mox inquit) certamina litis iniquæ
Compeecam, non erit cui suus obstet amor.
Vir, et induitur palla vilente Minorum:
Quique magister erat, fit pius ecce Minor.
Quos quid obest (dixit) humilem gestare togellam
Qui pariter gerimus nomen onusque patris?
Quid contra impediatur sublimi in nomine mentem
Cordigeros Fratres continuasse piam?
Discipulos Christi, quibus est lustrare popellos
Quis ferat ignaros, iussa docere Dei?
Non tumet irrigua celesti flumine virtus:
Nec sese extollit, cui Deus auctor adest.
Mens humilis pergat dolo, conserva Deorum,
Nec fama augescit, nec jacet, ima colens.
Jam primum posthac Doctor fratriculus ibo
Veste sub hac minimus, parta trophæa gerens.
Dixerat, hinc patuit Francisci semper alumnus
Laurea Doctorum, qui tot, ut astra, micant.
Tum demum ex superis captum germinare talentum,
Ne torperet iners, providus instituit.
At schola sacrorum quia nil satis ordine norat,
(Cuncta quidem incertis sparsa fuere locis.)
Hic prudens opifex multa celeberrimus arte,
Compagis et nervis consolidavit opus.
Hæc brevibus dixi: quæ cetera multa supersunt,
Non vacat ut noris, qui citus ire velis.
Clauditur hoc saxo, famam sortitus abunde,
Doctor Alexander junctus in axe Deo.
Si quis honor meritis, si qui virtute colatur,
Hunc animo præfer, hunc venerare patrem.
Ne sorde et culpa pigritie per otia deses
Nancisci studio, quæ Minor iste refert.

The lights which now come into view were given to the world at the same time. Amongst them we may distinguish Vincent of Beauvais, who, in an encyclopædical work, gave a general view of the state of science and philosophy, from which, perhaps, we may best learn the grounds of this great controversy between the nominalists and realists. The next is Michael

Scot, who, while still residing at Toledo, translated the books of Aristotle de Cœlo et Mundo, de Anima, and his Natural History, after the arrangement of the Arabians, in which work he was assisted by Andreas, a Jew. After him is seen Robert Grossetête, who studied at Paris and Oxford, and died bishop of Lincoln in 1253. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle. But it is the next which follows of the saintly splendours, Albert the Great, of the family of the Counts of Bollstädt, who brought the Aristotelian philosophy into fuller vogue. Born on the banks of the Danube, at Lauingen in Suabia, in 1193, after his first education at Passau he studied at Padua, and entered the Dominican order. His knowledge of natural philosophy was so great, that in subsequent ages impostors ascribed their magical books to him, as if he had been a magician. Though he made immense journeys, sparing no pains or cost to procure Greek books, he lived chiefly at Cologne and at Paris. He travelled always on foot, and begged by the way. Elected bishop of Regensburg in 1260, he at last renounced the episcopal dignity, and devoted himself wholly to learning in his cloister at Cologne, where, in earlier days, he had St. Thomas for his pupil. Guilielmus de Thoco, in his life of St. Thomas, says of Albert, "that in science he surpassed every man of that age;" and Ulrich Engelbert, the pupil of Albert, says, "he was a man in every branch of knowledge so divine, that he may deservedly be called the amazement and miracle of our times."* Such was his love of poverty, that he used to leave his own writings in the monasteries in which he wrote them, that he might keep nothing of his own. On his return from the council of Lyons, he continued to hold learned conferences in his cloister, till one day his auditors perceived that his memory failed him. This was a divine warning, which he recognised; for in his early years it had been predicted to him by a vision, that he should lose all his science before his death. He therefore renounced all relation with the world, and prepared for his holy passage, which took place in the year 1280. Tennemann is of opinion that he was more a learned man and a compiler, than a deep original thinker. But what is an original thinker in morals? He wrote a commentary on most of the works of Aristotle, making

* De Summo Bono, Tract. iii. c. 9.

great use of the Arabian authors, and mixing the new Platonic with the Aristotelian tenets. With him began the subtle division between matter and form, *essentia* or *quidditas* and *existentia*. Tennemann admits that rational psychology and natural theology are indebted to him for many just views. The former for the conception of the soul, as a *totum potestativum*; the latter for the accurate determining and limitation of the knowledge of God by reason. Conscience he regarded as the first law of reason, and he distinguished the application, *συμψηφισμός*, and the habitual intimation, or *conscientia*. All theological virtues are, according to him, *virtus infusa*. He died with the reputation of great for the present, and of blessed for the future world. Contemporary with him was that celestial joyance which is next in view; and O how lustrous, love seraphic, is thy semblance in those sparkles which are from holy thoughts inspired! Now doth it know the merit of its soul-impassioned strain. This, dear companion, is John of Fidenza, or Bonaventura, from whose living streams you have so often drunk. Bagnarea, in 1221, beheld his birth, and Lyons, in 1274, his glorious flight to heaven. His surname was the Seraphic Doctor. Tennemann says that he had less learning but more genius than Albert, and that his mind was more disposed to mysticism. In his Commentary on the Master of the Sentences, he placed limits to speculation, directed the philosophy of Aristotle and of the Arabians less to the defence of a vain desire of knowledge, than to the determining of important questions, and the reconciliation of contending meanings, as, for instance, to the subjects of individuality and freedom: he attended more to the practical direction of men than to theoretical ideas. "The highest good," he says, "is a union with God, in whom alone man sees truth and finds happiness." Accordingly, in his "*Reductio Artium in Theologiam*," he leads all knowledge back to illumination, and distinguishes four kinds—an external, inferior, internal, and principal. In his *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum* he describes the six steps of ascent to God, corresponding with as many faculties of the soul. In speculation, subservient to the highest good, he is mystical from his whole heart. "If it be asked," says the Chancellor of Paris, "who amongst other doctors should be preferred, I answer without prejudice, Lord Bonaventura, of whom one may say

truly, that, like another John, he was a burning and shining light. Amongst all Catholic doctors no one seems more fit to illuminate the intelligence and to inflame the heart." The most eminent admirers of his writings were Henry of Ghent, John Trithemius, St. Antoninus of Florence, and Sixtus of Sienna. The next is the great spirit of Aquinum, not so called from having been born at Aquinum, a Samnian not a Campanian city, but from the name of his family; for the Aquinas are in many places in Campania, and the saint was born at Belicastro.* He was induced, in opposition to the will of his family, through his thirst after an angelic life and wisdom, to enter the Dominican order in 1243. He studied under Albert at Cologne and Paris, and received the title of the Universal and Angelic Doctor. His history, composed by Tournon, is one of the most delightful books that the hand of man ever traced. Tennemann, and indeed all competent judges, admit that he possessed a truly philosophic genius—vast, almost incredible, knowledge and learning—with a most fervent zeal for the promotion of both. He was a realist, while he certainly admitted that the general did not of itself exist in the reality, further than the possibility; but he held the object of the understanding, or the abstract form of the thing, for the original existence of the thing; and he sought, by a development of the Aristotelian theory of thought, interwoven also with the ideology of Plato and the Alexandrians, to give a better holding to this system. He develops the idea of matter and form, as constituent parts of substance and of the principle of individuality. The reasonable soul, whose powers and peculiarities he regarded after the manner of Aristotle, is to him the substantial form of man, immaterial and immortal. The highest object of his application in theology, to which he imparts a philosophic form in his Commentary on the Master of the Sentences, in his work against the heathens (*Summa Catholicæ fidei adversus Gentiles*), and in his *Summa Theologiæ*. According to the opinion of Tennemann, he supposed that evil or the absence of good was necessary to the perfection of the whole. He carefully taught, however, that God was only incidentally its author.†

This wondrous work of St. Thomas

* Gabriel Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriae, Lib. ii. Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.
+ Sum. P. i. Qu. 49.

was the ground of Leibnitz's Theodicee. Ethics are divided by him into general and particular, and are treated of partly in a theological manner, and partly after that of Aristotle. "They are indebted to him," says Tennemann, "not a little: he maintains an alternate operation between the reason and the will, which is necessarily determined by the highest good, happiness, though it has freedom in the choice of the means leading to it. Such was his intellectual ministry, which left so mighty and imperishable a trace, though but for a short date below the world possessed him. Numerous are the lights whom we may see grouped round his saintly radiance, yielded chiefly by the Dominican and Jesuit orders. Amongst these are Giles of Colonna, the Roman, and Thomas de vico Cajetanus, Gabriel Velasquez, Petrus de Mendoza, Petrus Fonseca, Dominic of Flanders, and Francis Suarez: his contemporary, Petrus Hispanus, who became Pope John XXI. was distinguished for his *Compendium of Scholastic Logic*, *Summulas Logicales*. Henry Goethals, otherwise called Henry of Ghent, archdeacon of Tournay, was also a man of deep penetrating understanding; he was a realist, and united with the Aristotelian form Plato's ideas, which he held to be a kind of independent existences: he had however many peculiar views in psychology, and he often contradicts St. Thomas. Richardus de Media Villa, surnamed *Doctor solidus*, fundatissimus, copiosus, a Professor at Oxford, where he died in 1300, was also an acute commentator on the Lombard.

Duns Scot, the next of these resplendent forms, was born, some say in Tathmon, near Wexford, others in Dun, in the north of Ireland, at the extremity of the Isthmus of Lecalia, an ancient city, the see of St. Patrick and of St. Columban. Wadding infers that he was from Ireland, from his saying "*Sicut in definitione Sancti Francisci vel Sancti Patricii*," names which would first occur to him through affection for his order and his native land. The people of Duns, where was a convent of Minors till destroyed by the English, have always believed that he was their townsman; and Wadding rejects the testimony of the manuscript in Merton College, Oxford, which states that he was of Northumberland; for the inscription on his tomb on every one's tongue, contradicts it:

Scotia me genuit, Anglia me suscepit,
Gallia me docuit, Colonia me tenet.

Accordingly the Irish were always his benefactors. It was Maurice, archbishop of Tuam, long time professor at Padua, who published his works: it was Hugo Cavellus, archbishop of Armagh, who corrected them and separated the genuine from the spurious. Scot was born in 1274, the same year in which Bonaventura died, the admirable Providence of God ordaining that as one sun set another should rise upon the earth. When a boy, he was deemed heavy and stupid, but on going to Oxford, where he was taught grammar by two Minor friars, he soon distinguished himself, and became a master in all sciences—logic, physics, metaphysics, mathematics, geometry, astronomy, optics, civil law, canon law, and was saluted as prince of theologians. He wrote many volumes of Commentaries upon the Holy Scriptures, but his chief work, which he wrote at Oxford, is his profound Commentary on the four books of the Master of the Sentences. Called to Paris, he was placed in the chair of theology, when there were 30,000 scholars: he excelled first, in announcing accurate and universal propositions, to which as to principles he referred, and by which he solved all the most subtle theorems; secondly, in unfolding the reasons or essences, or as the Scotists say, "the quiddities and formal reasons of things; for since accidents depend on essences, he saw the importance of knowing them chiefly;" thirdly, he excelled in a natural force of subtle genius; he was remarkable also for not following any one master, but for approving and blaming all alike according to his judgment; yet, though he spared no one, he spoke so modestly and religiously, that no injurious word ever passed his lips or pen. Finally, as a philosopher, he is so Catholic that there never was a suspicion respecting a single line of all his writings; what he wrote or is said to have written at Paris, was, however, much inferior to the fruit of his labours at Oxford. By the guardian, Gondisalvus, in his letter to William Guardian, of Paris, Scot, who was still young, is termed a father of laudable life, excellent science, subtle genius, and of great renown; he defended the doctrine of the immaculate conception at Paris, with such force, that all conferred upon him the title of *Doctor Subtilis*, which is attested by these ancient rude verses on his tomb:

Concepta est virgo primi sine labe parentis:
Inde genus meriti tantum sibi Papa refundens,
Doctor Subtilis, dicitur.

In which lines Wadding understands by "Pope," only the bishop of Paris, all bishops being then so styled. He defended that doctrine also in such a spirit of moderation that the passage might be selected as a most admirable specimen of the calm wisdom of the blessed clean of heart ; gentle and not less powerful, clear and yet of unfathomable depth. Thus remarkable was the origin of the title conferred upon him.

In 1308, Scot, after reading at Paris before numerous disciples, received sudden orders to depart to Cologne. The circumstances of his departure gave rise to the sublime. He was taking recreation with his disciples without the city, in the Prato Clericorum, when the letters of his superiors were brought to him ; he read them and then announced to those around, that he was going to set out immediately without returning to the convent, and being asked by the astonished and admiring disciples, why he did not return there first to take up his manuscripts and bid adieu to the brethren ? he replied, "the father general orders me to set out for Cologne, but I do not read that he orders me to return home first, to take up my manuscripts, and salute the brethren. So he embraced them, and from the clerk's meadow began his journey to Cologne, where in a few months he was to close his short but glorious course. Men have wondered what could have been the motive of sending him from the first academy of the world to a city where there was not even then a university ; for these things occurred during the reign of the Emperor Albert : some suppose that it was to found that university, and to complete what Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas had begun there for letters ; others think that it was to oppose the heresy of the Begards, which was then raging ; others, that he was to conclude there as he had done at Paris, the controversy respecting the immaculate conception. Be that as it may, on his approach, the chief men of Cologne, with the clergy and people, went out to meet him, and conducted him with solemn pomp, as if he had been a mighty monarch, to the convent of his order. This beautiful triumph was like a beginning of the angelic escort, that was to conduct his soul to paradise, for the minister of death had then received commission to release it. Here he engaged in prodigious labours, preaching and disputing, and reading lectures, instructing the minds of men and correcting their manners, during the brief space which intervened before

the arrival of the octave day of All Saints, when he was called to the society of all the saints, and obtained eternal rest in God. He was buried at the entrance of the sacristy, in the convent of the Minors, but the body was afterwards removed into the choir. It is wonderful what diverse and strange accounts have been given of his death. Some say that he was struck with apoplexy, and that he was buried alive through too much haste in placing him in the tomb ; but Wadding refutes this assertion, by the mere fact, of the solemn religious rite always observed in the convent of Cologne, as elsewhere, which requires that the body should not be interred till the following day, at high mass ; besides, there were then many wise physicians and disciples who loved him, who would have first tried every experiment ; Bzovius adds, from Paul Jovius, that Scot, on coming to himself, ascended the steps of the sepulchre, beat against the door, devoured his own hand, and dashed his head against the wall ; and that his miserable groans had been heard within, though no one came to his assistance ; but Minor friars were always placed in the earth, where they can neither groan nor eat their hands ; and, moreover, their hands and feet are always bound ; besides, if he had been buried so quickly, there could not have been time to build a sepulchre so great as to have steps descending into it, nor could it have been already built, for the friars could not seize upon the tomb of any great noble to place in it one of the order. The same calumnies were repeated of Boniface VIII. ; but when, in 1506, his sepulchre was broken open, the body was found perfect, with a sapphire ring, which Cardinal Cajetan redeemed with 100 pieces of gold, on the finger of the hand which he was reported to have eaten. Other accounts respecting Scot, maliciously propagated by venal pens, do not deserve refutation, as they were not heard of till two centuries after his death. The Jovian words are, "Hoc anno volens, nolens, ex humanis abiit Joannes Dunsius."

Wadding hints at facts which may have led to such rumours. The holy man Gero, archbishop of Cologne, to whose election the pope assented by an angelic monition, remaining in an extasy, was buried alive by Walamus, the deacon, who desired the Episcopacy, which he obtained, but afterwards being penitent, he went to Rome, and was absolved, on condition of building a new monastery, or repairing an old one ;

and he repaired accordingly that of St. Martin at Cologne, and endowed it with great revenues for monks from Ireland; so the people hearing that the monastery of the Scotists was built on account of a man buried alive, it was rumoured that these foreigners obtained that noble residence at Cologne, on account of the wrong done to one of their nation, who was buried alive; and from a Scot to John Scot the transition was easy. Others say, from a supposed sermon of St. Bernardine of Sienna, that while he was enjoying God in an extasy, he passed to the Father, and so was buried ignorantly by the brethren. The passage is as follows—"We should elevate the mind from these sensual to insensible things, as it happened to the subtle Master Scot, who was so elevated in spirit, that the brethren, who knew not his manner, thinking him dead, put him under ground alive; and afterwards his disciples coming and making inquiries, found that it was so, and that he had been suffocated in the earth;" but this sermon is not of St. Bernardine. Still, however sudden, his death was precious and blessed.

*Mors justis subita, quem præcepit bona vita,
Non minuit merita, si moriatur ita.*

But, in fact, no ancient author mentions that Scot perished by violence or by apoplexy, or that he was buried alive; the verses on his tomb only imply that he disputed as usual on the very morning of his death, but that it was natural and without horror. His disciple Antonio Andrea declares, that his memory is in benediction, which sufficiently refutes such rumours. The first epitaph placed on his tomb in leonine verses, inspires reverence notwithstanding its rudeness.

*Clauditur hic rivus, fons Ecclesiæ, vis, vivus,
Doctor justitiæ studii flos, arca sophiæ.
Ingenio scandens, scripturæ abdita pandens
In teneris annis fuit, ergo memento Joannis,
Hunc Duns cornatum, fac cælitus esse beatum,
Pro patre translato, modulemur pectore grato,
Dux fuit hic cleri, claustris lux, et tuba veri.*

This inscription could long be read in the library of Cologne. There were added four lines to it when the bones were translated into the choir,

*Hic lector Scotus subtilis sit bene notus,
Doctor humi stratus, hac subque nola tumulatus;
Pro qua orate, Christi veniam flagitate,
Dicentesque pie, tu summe Deus miserere.*

In 1509 the sepulchre was more beau-

tifully sculptured, and a more polished epitaph inscribed on brass.

*Ante oculos saxum Doctorem deprimit ingens,
Cujus ad interitum sacra Minerva gemit,
Siste gradum lector, fulvo dabis oscula saxo:
Corpus Joannis hæc tenet urna Scoti.
Anno milleno ter c. c. cumque adderet octo,
Postremum clausit letho agitante diem.*

Placed upon two tablets were also these inscriptions,

*Parisius plora, mæstis incede lacernis,
Hic perit in toto, quod volat orbe, decus.
O Sorbona, tuas humiles compone cathedras,
Cultus ab ingenii fons sacer artis abest,
Straminis in vico placidi certaminis ordo,
Cespit, heu belli desinit esse caput.
Pondere supremi validos componite luctus
Doctiloqui, pulset tristitia corda pavor.
Hunc, posito vultu læto, defiete togati,
Discipulis labor hic omnibus unus erit.*

What follows are upon the second tablet:—

*" Doctor subtilis solvens sua lustra Joannes
Scotus in objectis ultima verba dedit.
Huic humilis casto Francisci cordula renes
Strinxit, erat sapiens, presbyter officio.
Fervebat studio, nulli virtute secundus,
Quod didicit totum, mox alios docuit.
Concepta est virgo primi sine labe parentis:
Hic tulit: hic heresi prælia dira dedit.
Inde genus meriti tantum sibi Papa refundens
Doctor subtilis dicitur, inde dedit
Quatuor in scriptis, quæ sunt divina probavit;
Hinc reliquis vates lumine plus vigit.
Quin et sancta mihi, quæ digna problemata liquit:
Ingeniis nostris fertiliora valent.
Artibus egit opem tuto, nunc ille modernos
Prosequitur pandens, quæ via sit veterum.
Tempora post Christi, propria dulcedine lethum
Venit atrox raptim carcere compositus.
Dogmata qui quondam retulit non infimus orbi,
Exiguus cunctis nunc silet exanimis.
Qui ratione stetit, non victus, semper Achilles
Cæno sordidior vincitur ille fimo.
Horrida jam sacros trahitur sub lite voranda,
Hunc subeant vermes, pro nova præda venit.
Ante gradus medios, nola nunc ubi pendet ab alto,
Hic chorus in terris ossa tenet tumulo.
Turba futura canet bona, quæ congestis in unum,
Singula quæ docuit, scripta relicta manent.
FleBILE qui busti præsens epigramma tueris
Hanc animam societ, posce Deum superis."*

The sepulchre of Scot had an elevation of three geometric palms; it was covered with plates of brass, in the midst of which was sculptured the image of Scot, holding a book, and having at his feet two lions; on his right hand were sculptured Guillelmus Ocham, Hugo de Novo Castro, Franciscus de Mayronis, Ricardus de Media Villa, Alexander de Hales, and on his left Nicolaus de Lyra, Petrus Aureolus, and Roger Bacon: at the upper end, at the head of Scot, were three pontiffs, of the

family of the Minors, Alexander V., Nicolaus IV., and Sixtus IV.: at the corners were two cardinals, St. Bonaventura, and Bertrand, with their insignia. Wadding says, "such care of the fathers towards the dry bones of this doctor, and such vast riches expended on his sepulchre, I attribute not so much to his doctrine as to his piety." "Truly he was a holy man," as the old poet says, "who, under a mean habit had an angel's heart," all his life was mystical and glorious. What a spirit of renouncement did he evince in that heroic departure from Paris, leaving, a great city, a celebrated academy, a grand convent, friends, disciples, writings, dear offspring of his genius, chairs and honours. With a true philosophic mind, he praised or blamed, indifferently, domestic or foreign writers; and such was his modesty and submission of his own judgment, that rarely he names the great authors whom he condemns. For St. Thomas he always evinced the greatest reverence, and he sought to make him agree always with Bonaventura. At Paris, Coimbra, Salamanca, Complutensia, Padua, Pavia, and at Rome, there were chairs expressly set apart for lectures on Scot, from which great advantage resulted: for such discussions were profitable. *Ferrum ferro exacuitur, et homo exacuit faciem amici sui.*—On this ground the historian of the Minors concludes, that the controversies between the Thomists and Scotists were beneficial to the general interests of philosophy. With a sincere and candid soul, this great scholastic examined truth, and, with a tranquil mind and a heart full of peace, treated on the mysteries of faith.

"You have, with the Prophet Isaiah," says St. Augustin, "the words, '*Venite disputemus, dicit Dominus*,' and in many other places of the divine Scriptures. Read these passages, and refer to the Greek codexes, in the same testimonies of the holy Scriptures, and investigate the origin of the term *Dialectica*, lest you should not imitate, with a wise piety, what all the just have done with God, to whom it has been said, '*Venite disputemus, dicit Dominus*,' but on the contrary should condemn it with insulting temerity."*

The obscurity of Scot arose from the profound nature of his subject, and therefore Trithemius says, "The most learned Scot was so profound, that his writings are penetrable only to a few." Tennemann says, that though Scot, as an opponent of

St. Thomas, was often led into vain and trifling distinctions, yet he joined also with that subtilty a striving after a deeper foundation of truth; for which end he sought a ground for the certainty of knowledge, rational as well as empirical, and directed his abilities to show the necessity and truth of the divine revelation. As a realist he dissented from St. Thomas, in maintaining that the general, not only in possibility but in reality, was grounded in the object; that it was not created by reason, but that it had an actual existence. In psychology he denied the real diversity of the soul's faculties, and maintained its unlimited freedom. In theology he sought to render more strict the cosmological proof of the existence of God, and to demonstrate the divine attributes; but he showed the impossibility of a theology which should be the result of reason alone. The Scotists, his followers, were in opposition to the Thomists, who adhered to the opinion of the Angelic Doctor.

The latter now pass before us. Giles of Colonna, the Roman, one of their most distinguished lights, was surnamed Doctor Fundatissimus, and Theologorum Princeps. He was born in 1247, and he died in 1316. He was a consistent realist, who held that truth existed as well in the understanding as in the object. The high service which he conferred, consisted in a clearer development of metaphysical problems and difficulties, and in attempts to reconcile the contending opinions with regard to existence, form, matter, and individuality. Near him we may remark Hervay Noel, or Hervæus Natalis, a monk from Brittany, rector of the university of Paris, who died at Narbonne in 1323. His dialectics were profound but more obscure than those of his predecessor.

The Scotists from the saintly throng which moves on the other side, amongst whom no one was more celebrated than the Minor friar, Franciscus de Mayronis, surnamed Doctor Illuminatus et Acutus, and also named Magister Abstractionum, the author of the Sorbonic Disputations—*Actus Sorbonici*, and celebrated in that age for his commentaries on Aristotle, St. Augustin, St. Anselm, the Lombard, and other philosophical works: he died at Piacenza, in 1325. Amongst the others we may distinguish, Hieronemus de Ferrariis, Alvarus Pelagius of Galicia, Antonio Andrea from Arragon, surnamed Doctor Dulcius, Walter Burleigh, Petrus Tartaretus the Franciscan, John Baptist Montorius,

* Lib. I. Cont. Crescen. cap. 14.

Joannes Canonicus, Landulphus Caraciolus, Joannes de Janduno, Hugo de Novo Castro, an Englishman, and Petrus Aureolus, who were all eminent among the strict disciples of the Scotist school. Other illustrious men belonged to it, but without evincing an exclusive attachment. Amongst these was Joannes Bassolius, of whom Scot used to say that he alone was always sufficient audience; for, on one occasion, finding but few persons assembled, he deferred commencing, until happening to perceive that Bassolius was amongst them, he began to lecture with alacrity, saying, "Bassolius adest? en auditorium est!"

Amidst the million lights, however, of this period, there stand yet two unnoticed, as wondrous, perhaps, in their respective form, as any that have ever, from our earth, returned to the skies. These are Roger Bacon and Raymund Lullus. The former, who was born at Ilchester in 1214, was styled, in reference to his prodigious knowledge of mathematical, physical, and chemical science, as also for his knowledge of languages, Doctor Mirabilis. We have already had occasion to make mention of his works, in our view of the learning of the ages of faith. He was a master of poetry, rhetoric, all polite learning, all liberal arts, all mathematical science, medicine, all philosophy, all theology and jurisprudence, Greek and Hebrew letters, all history and monuments of antiquity. He sent his disciple, brother John, of London, to Pope Clement IV., with books and mathematical instruments, constructed by himself to be presented to his holiness.*

The second of these saintly splendours yielded a different light. It was in the year 1275 that Raymund Lullus surnamed Doctor Illuminatus, was converted from the vain conversation of the world, to purity of heart, and the love of wisdom. He was born in Majorca, in the village of St. Michael. In youth his mind was averse from all kinds of science, and addicted to a palatine life. His parents, complying with his inclinations, sent him to the court of King James of Arragon, where as *seneschal* he lived abandoned to every kind of luxury, and consumed his days in vain amusements: he loved greatly to compose metrical songs, for which he became celebrated. Amongst those whom he selected for his reckless love, was a certain beautiful lady, whom by no arts he could ensnare. One day, being on horseback and passing

through the public place, he observed her going into a church, when, blinded through his amorous fury, all mounted as he was, he followed her into the temple, from which he was driven out by the people amidst general execration. The lady, grieved that a man of such honourable rank and dignity in the state, should become, on her account, a bye-word with the people, began to consider by what way she could wean him from that guilty passion: for this purpose she arranged with him a private interview, and then laying bare her bosom, disclosed to him a horrible cancer which preyed upon it. "Behold, O Raymund," she said, "what it is you love! Ah, turn to Christ that affection which you have hitherto cherished for me, and so deserve to receive from him a celestial crown!" Never was grace divine more rapid, in its transformation of a heart, than now. The unhappy man was struck dumb, and, on returning to himself, he fell upon his knees, and resolved to dedicate himself, ever after, to the Lord of each created being. Then, to sustain his first steps, was he vouchsafed visions celestial of Christ upon the cross, and voices were heard issuing from it, saying, "Raymund, follow me." Forthwith, renouncing the pomps of his office, and abandoning home, riches, and friends, he sold all his possessions, and, after making provision for his family, gave the rest to the poor.

His first desire was to preach to the Sarassins, and for this especial end he sought help and light from God. The gift of wisdom was then conferred upon him, so that he, who had before been wholly illiterate, became imbued with every kind of learning. His heavenly life began by visiting different holy places of devotion, as St. James of Compostello, that he might commend his enterprize to holy patrons. It was his wish to proceed to Paris, but St. Raymund, of Pennafort, dissuaded him from it. Returning to his country he applied to grammar, but at Lisbon, in his fortieth year, he first acquired a knowledge of Latin under Thomas his preceptor. He then began to compose a great work in that language, which he transmitted to posterity. In order to convert the Mahometans he learned Arabic. It was on a certain mountain, not far from his house, where he remained during seven days alone, in prayer and contemplation, that he is said to have received extraordinary light from heaven; then constructing a little cell there he remained many months,

* Wad. An. Minor. tom. iv. 1266.

day and night absorbed in meditation and prayer to God. Wild legends added, that the leaves of the tree, under which he rested, were imprinted with Greek, Arabic, Chaldaic, and Latin characters.

He now persuaded King James to found a college or convent in the island of Daya or Miramar, for thirteen Minor friars, who were to study the Arabic, for the express purpose of being sent to preach to the Mahometans, to labour for whose conversion all his mind was thenceforth bent. For this purpose he came to Rome, to arrange with Pope Nicolaus IV. about founding other monasteries and colleges for the oriental tongues. At length he resolved to pass into Africa; yet, when all was ready, and the ship about to depart, he became discouraged and remained at the port of Genoa; but when he saw the ship depart without him, he so bitterly condemned his own weakness and pusillanimity that he fell sick, and became profoundly penitent, grieving secretly with such interior affliction, that he was soon reduced to a shadow. On the eve of Pentecost he caused himself to be carried into the house of the Dominicans, when, hearing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, he prayed that his sins might be forgiven him. Then returning home, oppressed in mind and body, he sought the habit of St. Francis but could not obtain it, though he sought it with tears: then with knees upon the earth he received the Eucharist, after kissing the feet of the priest who brought it. Thus did he prepare as a Christian for his death. Hearing, however, that there was then a trireme in the port, bound for Tunis, even in that weak condition, he caused himself and his books to be placed on board. In vain did his friends and many pious men seek to detain him, thinking that he was at the point of death. He persisted in his resolution to embark, and the ship weighed anchor immediately; and no sooner was the vessel under sail than the clouds began to pass from his heart and his disease to diminish, so that, in a few days, he was wholly restored to health, and arrived at that city in great joy. Here he had frequent disputations with the most learned of the Sarassins, and instilled into many a more humane conception of the Evangelic law, some of whom he hoped to bring wholly to embrace it. But the king took alarm, and cast him into prison, called his seniors and deliberated about putting him to death, but they were moved to withhold that sentence by the gravity of the man, his eloquence, and his reverent looks. However he was

driven out of the city, and threatened with instant death if he returned, and while led to the ship he was struck and wounded with stones, and insulted with opprobrious epithets. Before the ship sailed, a Christian was mistaken for him, and on the point of being stoned, so he resolved to depart, though full of grief for having left imperfect the conversion of many.

He sailed thence to Naples, where he remained till the election of Celestine V. Here, in 1311, he wrote a book of disputations with a clerk, in which he speaks of himself as follows,—“I was a man joined in marriage, I had children, I was competently rich, licentious and worldly. I willingly gave up all things for the honour of God, and the public good, and that I might exalt the holy faith, I learned Arabic. Many times I went to preach to the Sarassins for the faith—being taken, I was imprisoned and scourged; and during forty-five years I have laboured, that I might move the rulers of the church and Christian princes to provide for the public good. Now I am an old man, poor, and I am in the same mind, and intend to remain in it till death, if our Lord should grant it to me.”

In 1295 he went to Rome, and thence, by Genoa, to the King of Majorca, with whom he had a long discourse on converting the nations. Thence he went to Paris. Whence, returning to his country, he disputed daily on the mysteries of the faith with Jews and Sarassins. Thence he went to Cyprus, to preach to the schismatics, Jacobites, and Nestorians, when he narrowly escaped death by poison administered to him. Thence he returned to Paris, where he remained till the election of Clement V. In 1312 he came to the council of Vienne, to propose his views for the good of Christendom.

Success so far attended his exertions, that he lived to see founded colleges for the study of the oriental languages, in the pontifical court, at Bologna, Paris, Salamanca, and Oxford, supported by the pontiffs and prelates of those nations, excepting that of Paris, which the king of France, through his singular affection for Raymund, wished to found and endow at his own expense. After leaving Vienne, he visited the courts of France and Spain, to exhort them to repress the Turkish power. Then he passed into Mauritania, having endured opprobrium and insults in many places, till he came at length to the city of Bona, which had been the see of St. Augustin, where he led to the light of faith seventy philosophers, followers

of Averroes. Thence passing to Algiers, he there also converted many, but in consequence, he was cast into prison, and left without food for fourteen days, with a bridle placed within his jaws. On being led out of prison he was publicly scourged through the streets of the city, and banished from the kingdom, and forbidden to return under pain of death. Nevertheless he preached again at Tunis, and at Bugia, where he was again imprisoned. He engaged in a long dispute on the Trinity, Incarnation, and on the sacraments, with Homer a Sarassin. Being liberated and sentenced to perpetual banishment, he embarked in a Genoese vessel, which, after a long and difficult course against violent winds, reached the port of Pisa and there was miserably wrecked in the sight of a multitude: Raymund escaped by swimming, and repaired to the Dominican convent, where he was hospitably received and lodged for a considerable time. From this accident he contracted a sickness which confined him many days, and on his recovery he received the rules and habit of the third order of St. Francis.

A second time he went to Pope Clement, to persuade him to procure a general movement for recovering the Holy Land. He now drew up a short history of his life and conversion, by desire of King James, of Majorca. It is thought by some, though without proof, that during this interval he went to England, there exercised the chemical art, produced gold money, and composed those books on alchemy which pass under his name, but it is certain that those books were not written by him. Returning home, with the intention of paying a last visit to his family, he wrote his book *De Fine*, in which he shows what was the object of all his labours. But now he burned with an ardent desire to close his life by martyrdom. The lively pressure of this zeal appears in all his works, and especially in his book on *Contemplation*, in which he says, "Men, O Lord, who die through age, perish through the deficiency of natural heat and the abundance of cold; and, therefore, thy servant and subject is unwilling, unless it be thy pleasure, to die such a death, for he wishes to finish his life through the ardour of love and charity, as in love thou didst deliver thy soul for us! Patient and commiserating Lord, oftentimes have I trembled with fear and cold! Ah, when will the day and hour arrive in which my body, through the great heat of love, and the ardent desire and joy of dying for its Creator and Saviour, shall tremble? Thy servant and subject, O Lord,

is now preparing himself for a journey, and for pouring out his blood for thee; therefore, before he comes to death, may it please thee to unite thyself with him in such manner that he may never be separated from thee in contemplation and love. O Lord God, most pious, when will the day come in which thy servant shall be bound hand and foot, that his body may be tortured to death for the love of thee his Lord and Saviour! Although I am unworthy, O Lord, to die for thee, nevertheless I will not give up all hope of obtaining this holy and precious death; for as thou O Lord, didst grant life to thy unworthy servant which he never merited, so likewise, if it pleaseth thee, thou wilt grant to him a glorious death, although he be utterly unworthy of it; and if, perchance, O Lord, thou shouldst refuse to me the death of martyrdom, at least I beseech thee grant me the grace of dying, weeping and desiring to die for the love of thee, O Lord, my Creator, and my Saviour—*Saltem rogo concedas mihi gratiam moriendi lachrymando, flendo, et desiderando mori pro amore tui, Domine, Creatoris, ac Salvatoris mei!*"

With these dispositions, at the age of seventy-nine, in the year 1314, and on the fourteenth of August, he, for the last time, passed to Africa, from the port of Majorca, the chief men of the city accompanying him to the cliffs, whose names are still preserved in the archives of that city. Arriving at Tunis, he encouraged and confirmed the disciples and those who had been already converted to Christ. Thence proceeding to Bugia, in secret conversations and discourses, he instructed some in the Christian faith; at length, disdaining his own indolence and timidity, he came forth in public and preached Christ openly, conjuring the Mahometans by the omnipotent God, who will appear to all men in the tremendous judgment, to fly the errors of that doctrine, and to walk in the light while it is yet day. Full of indignation, the Sarassins rushed upon him, and after inflicting stripes cast him into prison; there in various torments and left to famish with hunger, he ceased not, though in chains, to write and preach, till the magistrates decreed that he should be dragged out of the city and stoned. The satellites cruelly committed him to the infuriated multitude, who exercised on him all manner of barbarity with stones and swords. On his head, which in 1611, was taken out of the mausoleum, in presence of the magistrates and superiors of the Jesuit, Dominican, Franciscan, and other orders, there were observed four great wounds, two by a sword, and two by stones.

No part of his body was left sound, and he lay buried under a vast pile. Two merchants of Genoa, Stephen Colon and Lewis de Pastorga, begged that his body might be given to them. On bringing it to the ship they discovered that the spark of life was not quite extinguished—they put to sea, but after two days, and when in sight of his native island, Raymund expired, on the feast of the holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. Casting anchor in the port of Majorca, they concealed at first the treasure which was on board, intending to take it to Genoa, but scruples of conscience prevented them and they divulged it to the magistrates, who came, with the clergy and all the people, and placed the body in the church of St. Eulalia, intending to bear it to the paternal sepulchre at St. Mark's, but the Minor friars, on the ground of his belonging to the third order, succeeded in having him carried to their church, where they buried him near the tomb of a prince of Portugal, who had died on returning from the sepulchre of Christ. After some years, the convent having been burnt, the body was translated to the chapel of St. Mary with great solemnity.

Such then was the wandering, unstable, and inconstant life of Raymund Lully. Twice he visited both Armenias, Syria, and Palestine; once he visited Cyprus, and, as some suppose, all Egypt, Bohemia, and England; thrice he went to Mauritania and Paris, six times to Rome, frequently he traversed every part of Spain, Sicily, and Calabria; and what seems incredible, amidst such prodigious labours of travelling, he could compose many books, for he wrote wherewithal to form twenty volumes. He, who is not moved by the ardour of his faith, and desire of martyrdom, and perseverance in labouring for the religion of Jesus Christ, must, as Wadding observes, "assuredly have an unfeeling heart." The church, however, hath not pronounced a judgment respecting him.

The historian of the Minors defends his writings against the accusations of Eymericus and others, admitting that three of his propositions are hard; but as his style is obscure and his thoughts profound, recommending great caution and indulgence. All men do not receive those great secrets and recondite significations, which in the books of Raymund Lully may be contemplated with better and more favourable eyes. Whatever may be thought respecting the belief that his doctrine, either in whole or in part, was immediately by God infused into his mind, there can be no doubt, but that in a wondrous and divine manner, was the

intelligence of a rude illiterate man illuminated. He himself never said that all his knowledge was infused, but only a general art of meditation, and he always said humbly that if any errors crept into his writings, he offered them to the correction of the Holy Church, his mother. Falsely are ascribed to him the books, heretical and diabolic—*De Invocatione Dæmonum*, *De Secretis Naturæ*, *De Alchemia et Metallorum Metamorphosi*, which are by another Raymund, surnamed Neophitus, a Hebrew rabbin, converted, as it was thought, to the faith, and afterwards member of some order.

No one, more than Lully, ever inveighed with greater severity against the false rich and true poor, nor exposed with more energy, the fallacy of that art, in his book *De Questionibus solubilibus per Artem inventivam*. He showed that alchemy was not a real but a chimerical science; in his book *De Mirabilibus*, he proves it to be impossible, by alchemy, to transmute one metal into another; in his book *De Arbore Scientiæ*, he ridiculed the alchemists, as also in his work *De Principiis Medicinæ*. The *Testamentum Novissimum* is not composed by him. In his theological work on the books of the *Sentences*, in a copious and unusual manner of speaking, he comprehends all the secrets of the faith, and institutes many questions on each of the controversies of theology. Among his works, one book is entitled "*Dominus quæ pars*," which is a disputation between Raymund and Dun Scot, of which the origin was curious. Raymund and his disciples being present at a disputation of Scot, and expressing by signs their dissent, Scot, surprised at such conduct from men who had a rude exterior, in order to try whether their chief knew grammar, asked him, "*Dominus quæ pars*?"—meaning of the discourse; and Raymund answered immediately, "*Dominus non est pars sed totum*," and then made a discourse on the divine mysteries, which was still more profound than that of the subtle doctor. His books on contemplation breathe a fervent piety: besides these, a variety of small treatises indicate a man of subtle genius, apt for every science and art. In his defence Wadding remarks that the great and little arts of truth have admirable windings, by which no one can enter, though with the thread of an Ariadne, without often failing in judgment.

His style, however, is rude, and even barbarous, and his sentences are often expressed in such a manner as to excite cavils at his doctrine. Yet, if he did contract errors, one who died for the faith with such admirable

zeal and simplicity, and who submitted all his writings humbly to the correction of the Roman Church, is never to be styled a heretic. As St. Jerome says, "Heretics, not alone make for themselves idols of errors, but also adore, from their hearts, what they have made." Without pertinacity, therefore, as Wadding observes, no one is ever proclaimed a heretic; and this was expressly declared by Honorius III. in the cause of the Abbot Joachim, when he wrote to certain prelates charging them to punish those who should thenceforth call Joachim a heretic, on account of his book against Peter Lombard, having been condemned by the general council of Lateran.*

According to Tennemann, the great art which Raymund was supposed to have received in a vision whence he received the title of Doctor Illuminatissimus, was nothing else but a logical, mathematical method of combining ideas in classes, and therewith to solve all scientific problems, a universal art of discovery founded upon topics. In this he had united some ideas from the philosophy of the Arabians and from the Cabbala, of which last he seems to have been the first among the Christians who had any knowledge. Not to speak of his *Ars Magna*, which, in subsequent times, found admirers in some strong understandings, the clear views of morality, which are conveyed in his numerous writings, have extorted the admiration of modern philosophers, who, like Tennemann, have had the courage to consult them. The speculators who pretended to be his disciples, styling themselves Lullists, transplanted his religious enthusiasm and faith into the art of making gold, though not without evincing many remarkable and clear views. With some of these men we shall meet in another place, and in very different company from the present; the dark figure of Peter of Apono would ill accord with these holy splendours; but of his chief assistant, Arnold of Villeneuve, who was a disciple of Lullus, I may even here briefly speak; for Arnold was never condemned by the Holy See: on the contrary, the following letter from Vienna of Pope Clement, may be read in the Vatican. "While Master Arnold de Villanova, clerk of Valentia, our physician, was living, after we had been raised to the summit of apostolical dignity, he used often to say to us that he had compiled a very useful book on the Practice of Medicine, which he frequently promised to give us; therefore, since the said Master Arnold has been prevented by

death from fulfilling his promise to us, we charge your fraternity, and all subject to you, by Apostolic writings, as also all abbots, priors, and deans, to announce, that whoever shall have, or shall know who hath that said book, must take care to reveal and transmit it to us under pain of excommunication."* But to the costlier splendours we must return. Such then was the third family of the Almighty Sire, who, of his spirit made them largely drink, and held them always ravished with his view. The fourth period from the fourteenth till the end of the fifteenth century, involves the renewed combat between the nominalists and realists, which terminated apparently in the victory of the former. The lights that now move towards us were then conspicuous: of these the first is William Durandus de St. Porciano, called Doctor Resolutissimus, and bishop of Meaux, in the beginning of the fourteenth century. He was a thinker, who, perceiving the groundlessness of a dialectic play with ideas, sought to solve many difficulties by a clearer and more defined division, and by a more strict separation of the subjective and objective in knowledge, to prepare the way for other antagonists of realism. From being at first a Thomist, he became the stoniest adversary of that school. He who follows more as a shadow than a light contributing to the general effulgence, is William of Ockham, of the county of Surrey, called by some Doctor Singularis et Venerabilis Inceptor. This famous adversary of John the Twenty-second, who studied at Paris, was a Scotist and a Franciscan. Tennemann, says, "that through his philosophic penetration and zeal in combating despotism, he made an epoch in philosophy and history; but as he advocated the cause of the king of France and of the emperor against the pope, we may easily understand what means this pretended hostility to despotism. *Entia non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem*, was his maxim. He abandoned realism for the opposite system, which he defended with great zeal, endeavouring to show that "general ideas can have no objective reality out of the understanding;" that they are a mere product of abstraction and figments themselves.† In respect to his "Theory of Knowledge and Science," which he divided into real and rational, he prepared the way more than he wished for scepticism and empiricism, an admission on the part of his eulogiser, of

* Wadding, *Annal. Minorum*, tom. v. vi.

* Wadding, *Annal. Min.* tom. VI.

† Comment. in Lib. 1. sent. dist. 2. 4. et. 8.

which we should take note. While he thus undermined the reigning philosophy, he sought in theology to confine the compass of demonstrative knowledge, and rejected all the proofs previously adduced to demonstrate the existence, unity, and eternity of God, declaring all this to be an opposition against faith.

In psychology he had some deep and excellent views; he refuted circumstantially the opinions of the objective form, species, which was regarded as a necessary condition of contemplation and thought. His books were proscribed from the schools at first, generally, afterwards in the year 1341, with especial references to five articles, the last of which was, "that Socrates and Plato, God and the creature, are nothing," without the terms being understood, for Ockham and his disciples placed all their knowledge in words.* In the lists of his opponents are many glorious lights, amongst which we may distinguish again his fellow student Walter Burleigh, styled Doctor Planus et Perspicuus. Born in 1275, he studied at Oxford and Paris, and died in 1337; he wrote a Commentary on Aristotle, and a work *De Vitis et Moribus Philosophorum et Poetarum*. There were also opposed to Ockham the three celebrated realists, Thomas of Bradwardine, who died archbishop of Canterbury in 1349; Thomas of Strasburg, who died as Prior General of the Augustin hermits in 1367; and Marsilius of Inghen, rector of the university of Heidelberg. The two next are the most celebrated nominalists, John Buridan, of Bethune, and Peter d'Ailly. The former taught philosophy and theology at Paris: his rules for the discovery of intermediate ideas, though ridiculed by some, and his inquiries with respect to the will, gained him great celebrity: he held that the will of the soul was determined in its choice by the pleasure or displeasure caused by the object; but the example ascribed to him of the hungry ass between the two bundles of hay, is not found in his writings. Peter d'Ailly, surnamed the Eagle of Gaul, was born in 1350, at Compiègne; he was successively Chancellor of the University of Paris, bishop of Puy and Cambrai, and finally Cardinal. He was an enemy of the confusion which then disunited the scholastic philosophy; his thoughts upon the certainty of human knowledge, and his proofs of the existence and unity of God, are said to be deserving of great attention.† We

see next other advocates of nominalism, Robert Holcot, an Englishman, General of the Augustin order, Gregory of Rimini, Richard Suinshead, an English Cistercian monk of Oxford, both of which latter taught at Vienna, the enlightened and candid Heinrich von Hessen, and Heinrich von Oyta, Nicholas Oresmius, Matthew of Cracow, and Gabriel Biel, of Spire, who died professor of theology and philosophy at Tübingen, in 1493. Tennemann says, "that all these were men of great merit, of clear heads, though without any peculiar philosophic talent," which is a sentence that the reader may interpret as he will. In 1339, 1340, 1409, and 1473, the opinions of the nominalists were condemned at Paris, and their writings prohibited, yet their adherents began to be numerous, both there and in the German universities. The metaphysical point of dispute between the two parties respecting general ideas, was accompanied with a much more profound and extensive cause of opposition in their respective modes of thinking. For, in the nominalists, appeared a greater inclination to resist authority, and break through the salutary restraints which it imposed, still, as yet both were faithful.

The consequence, however, of this dissension between the two parties, was a declining estimation of all controversial exercises, which Gerson, in his complaints of the state of logic, contributed greatly to bring into disrepute, and, hence, the tendency of the school, and of the public mind, was now more than ever towards mysticism, through weariness and aversion for empty formulas and strife of words. Now come into view some great advocates of that holy ascetic wisdom, which had so brightly illuminated the early Church. Children and poor rustic persons, angels and spirits of just men departed, were now the masters of philosophy in most esteem. John Thaulerius, who taught at Strasburg, of whose admirable conversion we may speak hereafter, and Gerson, who succeeded Peter d'Ailly as Chancellor of the university of Paris, Nicholas de Clemangis, a bold thinker, rector of the university of Paris in 1393, Thomas Hamerken or Malleolus, surnamed Kempis, from the place of his birth, in the archbishopric of Cologne, and John Wessel, named by his contemporaries *Lux et Magister Contradictionum*, John of the Cross, and St. Theresa, Louis of Blois, and the Augustinian canon, who styled himself the Idiot, are amongst the precious and bright beaming stones that ingem this hallowed light of

* P. Berthier, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. xiii. 38.

† *Quæst. Super. IV. Lib. sent.*

paradise. Then follows Raymund de Sabunde, whose writings on natural theology were remarkable at this period, having taught at Toulouse in 1436. He held that men have two books from God, conveying the knowledge of God and our relation to him, and these are nature and revelation. But now the radiance seems to fade away; for we are arrived at the fifteenth century, when the disorganization of Christendom, in consequence of the Lutheran heresy, and the diminution of faith, indicate that we must proceed no farther in tracing the history of the clean of heart, in relation to the intellectual aspect of the world.

It is remarkable that these founders of a new order of philosophy should avowedly have gone back to the works of the heathen Greeks and Romans, as to the fountain whence they might assuage the thirst which oppressed them for a new knowledge, and that the most prominent result of their labours should be a more exclusive application of the human mind to the pursuit of natural philosophy, and of mere human learning. A formal war against the scholastics was now waged by men, who seemed more inclined to revive the ancient schools of heathen philosophy, than to adhere to any doctrines which had obtained the assent of Christian ages. Every thing was now in repute but the scholastic philosophy; there was the new Platonism, the Cabbala, theosophy and magic, the Aristotelian, Ionic, and atomistic system, and even to the Stoics and Epicureans opened a prospect of revival. Nevertheless, amidst the figures that attract notice from their fatal celebrity, we cannot avoid observing still many holy lights agitated, indeed a little, perhaps, by the conflicting winds around them, but still pure and following in the lustrous track of heaven.

It is certain that some even of the most faithful Christians were now attracted by this doubtful wisdom, and affected by the general influence. One of the first thinkers, who abandoned the banners of the scholastic philosophy, was the Cardinal Nicolas Casanus, the apologist of learned ignorance, who held the precise seizing of truth to be unattainable, and that we could rise no higher than conjectures. To the propagation of this new Platonism contributed not a little the writings of Marsilius Ficinus, who translated also Plotinus, Jamblichus, and Proclus, and became founder of the Platonic academy, under Cosmus de Medici. His enthusiasm seized John Pico of Mirandula, who possessed vast learning with a deep sense of religion, and an ardent attachment of faith.

He had studied the scholastic philosophy, and was convinced that Plato's wisdom was derived from the Mosaic writings, which were to him the treasury of all science and art: to the demonstration of this point was employed his study of the oriental languages, and of the cabalistic writings, and in his old age he wrote an excellent refutation of the astrological errors. But now the radiance which has so long afforded contentment to our eyes has nearly vanished away; the blessed luminaries are gone by, and after them pass along dark and sorrowful figures, misshapen phantoms that seem to mimic with their pale delusive glares the splendour of the saints, and the brightness of the clean of heart.

To this period belonged John Reuchlin, the friend and promoter of classical learning, who was a disciple of the new system of Cabalistic and Platonic philosophy, whose works *de Verbo Mirifico* and *de Arte Cabalistica*, with those of Cornelius Agrippa, *de Occulta Philosophia*, and *de Incertitudine et Vanitate Scientiarum*, might well have yielded a triumph to the followers of the scholastic wisdom, and were now told that magic was the perfection of philosophy, and who were to find a cynic contempt of all excellence defended with sophistical subtilty.

Paracelsus, born at Einsiedeln, was to reform medicine too by uniting it with the cabalistic learning, expressed in the unintelligible language of theosophy, which was in the seventeenth century to be the foundation of the Rosenkreuzian society. The titles of books were now all cabalistic, and wonderful, professing as those of Weigelius, to unfold the art of all arts, the secret of all secrets, and as those of Rosenkreuz, to bring about a general reformation of the whole world, and a universal fraternity. The noble genius of the celebrated natural philosopher and mathematician, Jerome Cardan, of Pavia, was now seen supporting astrology and cabalistic superstition, with all their extravagances of destiny and familiar demons. That remarkable poet, Giordano Bruno, the Italian Dominican, was now with restlessness and thirst for renown, preparing the way for his miserable end, by maintaining the imperious pre-eminence of magic and astrology, the eternity of the world, and the system of pantheism, mistaken by his contemporaries for atheism, which was taught by Plotinus in ancient, and by Spinoza in modern times. Aristotle was now studied more than ever, not as in the scholastic ages, in connection with faith, but in opposition to it; for the

separation and division of philosophical and theological truth, was supposed to serve as a shield against the danger of heresy.

The disputes respecting the principle of thought and immortality, which divided the two parties of the new Aristotelians, the Averroists and the Alexandrians, obliged the Lateran Council in 1512 to raise its voice in behalf of orthodoxy. Italy now again possessed Peripatetics in Peter Pomponatius of Mantua, Simon Porta of Naples, Paulus Jovius of Como, Julius Cæsar Scaliger, Julius Cæsar Lucilio, Jacob Zabarella, Francis Piccolomini of Sienna, Cæsar Cremonini, Alexander Achillinus of Bologna, named the second Aristotle, and Marcus Antonius Zimara, whose heathen appellations alone are sufficient to indicate the intellectual revolution which had taken place. The titles too which these men assumed, presented a singular contrast to those worn so humbly by the great luminaries of the Catholic school. Instead of the epithets seraphic, angelic, or illuminated, applied to the scholastic doctors, we have such as are derived from the writings of pagans, and the language of their blind idolatry: thus, the new theologians Jurisconsults, Physicians, and all, as Heinsius says, that were great in learning, saluted Joseph Scaliger as "*Doctorum solem—Patris divini sobolem divinam—genus deorum—perpetuum literarum Dictatorem*," to none of which Daniel Heinsius, the champion of liberty, evinced the slightest objection. They styled him also, "*Maximum naturæ opus et miraculum—extremum naturæ conatum*."* It was men on whom such titles were conferred, who with John Sépulveda, the Spaniard, and many of the religious innovators in Germany, were questioning the most important truths, and continuing the separation between natural wisdom and positive faith. Petrus Ramus, to whom adhered Francis Fabricius, the poet Milton and others, who obtained the title of Ramists, applied himself in his "*Ars bene disserendi*," embracing logic and rhetoric, to oppose the study of Aristotle, while a third or eclectic party sought to unite his method with the Aristotelian logic of Melancthon. With less enthusiasm, though equal compromise of Christian truth, did Stoicism now lay claim to converts, whose study of Cicero and Seneca led them to embrace a system of natural morality: of this number were Justus Lipsius, of Isla, near Brussels, who wanted only constancy to be a stoic in his life, as well as in his philosophy, Schoppe,

a man, as Tennemann observes, of doubtful character, and Thomas Gattacker of London, who, with Claude Saumaire, and Daniel Heinsius, brought history to the support of their system. Together with philosophy and religion, the science of politics was now to be reformed, and the Prince of Machiavelli showed what was in the mind of a statesman, formed not by Giles of Colonna, and the faith of Rome, but by the classics and the study of the world; while John Bodin, of Angers, in his Republic, sought by an intermixture of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, to establish a just medium between democracy and absolute monarchy. The diversity and hostility of views and ideas produced by these heathen studies—the decay of self-confidence which ensued,—the disputes, concerning the certainty of knowledge, and the want of an incontestible principle, led, as was natural, to the development of scepticism, which, in itself, assumed a variety of characters, till the logical deductions from heresy produced their effect upon the multitude, and completed the atmosphere which encompasses the world at the present day, through which men find it irksome or impossible to behold God.

But not in such darkness are we to be dismissed, after beholding the splendid succession of blessed luminaries. Still we may discern those who are of the number of the clean of heart, who see their Maker, and so shine that in their looks accordant our soul finds its delight. Many were the eminent men who still adhered to the principles of the scholastic age, while they pursued with success those branches of philosophy, the cultivation of which had experienced a true and salutary reform. Among these must be pointed out Francis Patritius, who was born at Clessa in Dalmatia, in 1529: he taught philosophy at Ferrara and at Rome, and published *Discussiones Peripateticæ*, in which he supported his theory of light from Aristotle as the principle of all things. Nor should we suffer to pass unnoticed that throng of great physicians who still were Padua's boast—James Zanetino, Sigismund Polcastro, Bartholomeo Montagnana, Bernardine Sperono, Baptist Leonio, Jerome Tiraboscho, Jerome Stephanello, Francis Bonafide. Here, amidst blessed luminaries, we meet again Thomas Campanella, the Calabrian friar of the order of St. Dominick, whom we observed in the last book experiencing the charities of the blessed merciful. As a philosopher, great was his merit. He held that the fountains

* Heinsii Orat. II.

of all knowledge were revelation and nature; that the former is the foundation of theology, and the latter of philosophy; and that both are only the divine and human history. He had a clear philosophic head, well furnished with knowledge and warmed with a genuine love of truth. His efforts were directed to prove the possibility of a philosophy which would be secure from the doubts of the sceptics, for which end he lays down in his metaphysics certain incontrovertible principles. In practical philosophy his views were admirable: he showed that endless existence is the highest good, for which all things strive, and which is obtained through religion. Religion, he says, is the way by which the soul passes from the sensual to the spiritual world, or to the highest perfection: religion consists in obedience to God, the observance of duty, and the love of God. His negative merit was great in opposing Atheism, false policy, or Machiavelism, and in the defence of the freedom of thought and the just rights of human reason. In regard to metaphysical studies, the two processions may be seen diverging still farther from each other, but not to the discomfiture of the ancient by the new. While Hobbes, Lord Herbert of Cherbury,

Spinoza, and Locke were developing the fruits of the modern inquiries in the system of materialism and sensuality, Malebranche, Fardella, and Pascal were enriching the stores of Catholic philosophy with profound and inspiring thoughts, and handing down the precious testimony that the highest and most perfect philosophy is that which confirms or illustrates the doctrines of the Catholic Church. But from celestial courts we must descend, nought displeased at having thus looked upon the lights which shine distinct amidst the mighty host of paradise, and marked the earthly course of some in that eternal radiance, which, if we are blessed, reader, in the final judgment we shall see. And now, to use the words of Dante, as the chime of minstrel music, dulcimer and harp, makes pleasant sound to him who heareth not each note, so from the glorious orb which has revolved before us, circling round the cross, with voice still answering voice, a melody ensues, which, though indistinctly heard, with ravishment transports the soul. Such is the result of a passing glimpse at the wisdom of the clean of heart—of those who saw their Maker in light intellectual, replete with love.

CHAPTER VII.



ALTHOUGH, from what has already been observed of the men who philosophized during the ages involved in this history, some light may have been incidentally thrown upon the systems or opinions most generally professed, it will now be expedient to consider what were the great leading features common to them all, and without attempting to analyze the peculiar dogmas of any of the particular schools which attained celebrity, to lead the reader upon such ground as will enable him to discern the essential characteristics which distinguished their philosophy in general from every other system, either in times prior to Christianity, or in these latter ages of the world, wherever the influence of divine faith has been

withdrawn. In regard to physical science, their defects have been shown, one might suppose, sufficiently often. It is but just that some attention should be paid to the distinguishing features of their intellect and habit in other respects, and to their success in the cultivation of that higher philosophy which regulates the will and the affections.

There seems a sort of fatality attending those who sought, in the sixteenth century, to change the religion of the Christian world, that even when approaching ground of metaphysical philosophy, they should never adopt a form of sound words. Luther maintained, at one time, that what is true according to faith may be impossible and absurd according to reason. In *theologia verum est*, he says, in *philosophia simpliciter impossibile et absurdum*.

Wholly opposed to such views, the scho-

lastic wisdom of the clean of heart in ages of faith resulted from the conviction that religion and philosophy were inseparably interwoven with each other in harmonious unity, and that one could never contradict the other. Hegel remarks, that by the fathers of the church philosophy and theology were united and studied in common, and that we see also in the middle ages the same combination of theology and philosophy. Scholastic philosophy is one and the same with theology. Philosophy is theology, and theology is philosophy. So little were men inclined to suppose that theology could be injured by the other knowledge, that they believed it to be nothing else itself but theology. The whole middle ages understood theology as a scientific knowledge of Christian truth; that is, a knowledge essentially bound up with philosophy.* That such were the views of the fathers, might be shown from many passages of their works. In *sapientia religio, et in religione sapientia est*, says Lactantius; therefore they cannot be separated, because it is the same God who ought to be understood, which is the part of wisdom, and honoured, which belongs to religion.† St. Augustin says that the wisdom of man is piety;‡ and St. Gregory Nazianzen calls mystic theology “a sovereign philosophy.” Indeed, St. Augustin lays it down as an article of belief, comprising the sum of human safety, “*non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiæ studium, et aliam religionem*.”§ To the same effect speak all the scholastic doctors of the middle age. Hugo of St. Victor expressly reckons theology as a branch of philosophy, adding, “but this is the sum of philosophy and the perfection of truth.”|| “As for what was called philosophy by the Greeks,” says John Scotus Erigena, speaking of its divisions and classifications, “we believe and teach with St. Augustin, that philosophy, which is the love of wisdom, is nothing else but religion; and what proves it to be this is, that we do not receive the sacraments in common with those of whose doctrine we do not approve. What, then, is it to treat of philosophy, unless to lay down the rules of the true religion by which we seek rationally and adore humbly God, who is the first and sovereign cause of all things? Hence it

follows that the true philosophy is the true religion, and reciprocally that the true religion is the true philosophy.”* “Of philosophy there can be no end,” says John of Salisbury, “for it is nothing else but the love of God; and if the love of God be extinguished, the name of philosophy vanishes.”

“All studies, therefore, worthy of this name, must tend to the increase of charity; and he who acquires charity or increases in it has gained the highest object of philosophy. This is, therefore, the true and immutable rule of philosophers,—that all reading or learning should be made conducive to truth and charity, and then the choir of all virtues will enter into the soul as if into a temple of God. They err, therefore, and impudently err, who think that philosophy consists in words alone. These are the men who desire the vain reputation of wisdom, and are indifferent to the real possession of truth; then they multiply words, and propose a thousand little questions, and endeavour to perplex others by the intricacy of their language, in order that they may seem more learned than Dædalus. But though eloquence is a most useful and noble study, this loquacity of vain disputants is a thing to be fled from, for he who speaks sophistically is hateful.†

“The order of knowledge, in relation to science,” says Henry of Ghent, “is twofold—*ex parte nostra*, and *ex parte rei*: first, *ex parte nostra*, one particular science is ordained to another, when by its means we can more easily come to a knowledge of that other; and secondly, *ex parte rei*, one particular science is ordained to another when it attains but imperfectly what the other attains perfectly: and in these two respects all other sciences are ordained to theology. First, *ex parte nostra*, because by means of them the way is rendered more easy to us of attaining to it; for the order of our discipline requires that we should ascend from the imperfect to the perfect, and from things better to things less known; and, therefore, the knowledge of God is the last end of our intention in philosophic sciences, and all other sciences teach us to come to the knowledge of God; they teach us by things more known, that is, by creatures, in which causes are seen in their effects. Secondly, *ex parte rei*, all other sciences are ordained

* Hegel, *Philosophie der Religion*, vol. i. 11, 67, 294.

† *De Falsa Sapientia*, IV. 4.

‡ *Enchirid.* § *De Vera Relig.* 5.

|| *In Explanat. Cœlest. Hier.* c. i.

* Joan. Erig. de *Divina Prædestinatione*, c. i.

† *De Nugis Curial.* cap. 12

to theology, as if minor to the principal, both practically and speculatively: practically, because theology considers and has regard to the last end, to which are really ordained the bounds of all practical sciences, which are in themselves imperfect, and which can only be perfected by being reduced to their last end, at present by grace, hereafter by glory; and therefore we read, vain are all men in whom is not the science of God. Similarly speculative sciences are ordained to theology, because it is the chief of them all, inasmuch as it considers the first principles under which all other things are contained that are considered in other sciences, which have no perfect knowledge unless so far as they are ordained to their first principles; and therefore, it is said to be metaphysically impossible to know the quiddities of sensible sciences, if the first cause of all be not known; therefore, it is of theology to judge all other sciences," (as far as regards the direction given to them being understood,) "approving those things that are well said, and reprobating the contrary."*

Aristotle had said, "Since many things are ordained for one, it is necessary that one should be a ruler over them, and the rest in a state of subjection;" upon which St. Thomas observes, that all sciences and arts are ordained to one end, namely, to the perfection of man, which is his beatitude; therefore, it is necessary that one of them should be the ruler of all others.† "Since the end of all philosophy," saith he, "is within the end of theology, and is ordained to that, theology ought to command all other sciences, and make use of them;‡" so that, as Ventura concludes, "there was a certain hierarchy maintained among the sciences as well as among persons, from a firm conviction that if it were overthrown anarchy would be introduced into the intellectual, in the same manner as, in the absence of rule, it would be seen to invade the political order."

Christianity received letters and sciences when they fled from the fury of barbarians. The Church protected and nourished them, but she retained them in their natural order of ethics, logic, and physics, which accords precedence to what relates to God. This was the order received in the schools of Christian nations during the ages of faith, when the reason and office of pur-

suing the wisdom of Christians were as well known to all men as if in front of every school and university had been inscribed these divine words, "Quærite primum regnum Dei et hæc omnia adjicientur vobis."

"There is a certain secular science," says St. Bernard, "which inebriates not with charity, but with curiosity, which fills but does not nourish, inflates and does not edify, swells and does not strengthen." And there is another science of which St. Augustin says, "There is a science which is not of vain things or of curious things, but of those by means of which that wholesome faith which leads to true beatitude is begotten, nourished, defended, and confirmed; and this is called the gift of the Holy Spirit." "This," adds St. Bonaventura, "is the science of the saints." Therefore he concludes with St. Jerome, in his Prologue upon the Bible, "Let us learn, while on earth, the science that will remain with us in heaven; for it would be unworthy if I had to labour so much for a science which was to end in death."

Such was the general view of philosophy in ages of faith; therefore, as an able French writer observes, that which belonged to the middle ages is not to be sought for in the sensation of Condillac, nor in the sterile ideology of his disciples—nor in the psychological observations of the Scotch school, nor in the eclecticism which pretends to compose truth out of errors, nor in the boasted oracles of common sense—here are only opinions, theories, systems—but it was in the Christian religion that the philosophy of the middle ages consisted. It had no need to listen to the voice of one man, or of all men, for it heard a superhuman voice—that voice which was heard in Eden, in the desert of Sennaar, on Mount Horeb, on Sinai, on the Jordan, on Golgotha.*

"However great, during that period, was the passion for knowledge," says Staudenmaier, "however acute and profound were the geniuses which it impelled, however incapable any subject was found to keep down their bold aspiring flight, still their spirit remained ever humble, and they honoured the gospel as that higher light in which we see the first true light. Their disposition to inquiry continued still free, while their spirit remained believing. Thus to Erigena divine revelation was the im-

* Henricus Gandav. tom. i. art. vii. q. ix. f. 59.

† In *Metaphys. Aristot. Lib. i. Prolog.*

‡ In *Lib. i. Sent. Prolog.*

* L'Abbé Bautain, de l'Enseignement de la Philosophie en France.

moveable foundation-stone of truth, and upon faith he declared must science first unfold itself. "The salvation of faithful souls," he says, "is to believe in the one principle of all things which are truly preached, and what are truly believed to understand."* "The beginning of ratiocination," he says again, "I consider must be assumed from divine words; for from them, of necessity, all inquiry after truth must take its beginning."†

This was the spirit of Anselm, too, and of all the scholastics of the middle age. Their efforts were all directed towards the true reason and intelligence in God, to which region of light their looks were fixedly bent; and therefore, in all phenomena, affairs, and institutions, they evinced an ideal impression—the lofty, the sublime, the fixed, and the eternal. As in their structures—especially in their churches, whose turrets sparkled in the skies—all was directed towards them, the highest object being nothing else but the circle of God's infinity, as it were to show symbolically the Divine Being, so in like manner the scholastic had no other limit in science than that of raising upon the foundation of the Christian faith a structure of truth, which with its pinnacles might reach heaven. The eternal, which no mortal can give, was supplied in revelation: and on that holy ground resting secure and immoveable, they sought to introduce into the kingdom of nature and of spirit, in terminations and syllogisms, in thesis and antitheses, in questions and responses, in distinctions and conclusions, the shafts and columns of the system, to strengthen and represent the one truth. Thus revealed itself the fulness of substantial truth, in the most varied form; while streamed forth also light in multifarious revelations, which was still ever referred to the one primal and inexhaustible essence."‡

"The summum bonum," says Peter the Venerable, "is a happy eternity. Who, then," he continues, "will dare to say that he philosophizes who, with all his efforts, tends not to eternal beatitude, but to eternal misery?"§

The philosophy of the ages of faith was, in effect, the philosophy of the Psalms—the philosophy of the church offices, of those sacred chaunts which rose to God from solemn choirs in every region of the earth; it was the philosophy which Jesus,

the Divine Master, taught the multitude. What did he teach them, seeing the crowds? "The eight beatitudes," replies St. Bernardine of Sienna; for the general understanding of which that holy teacher invites his auditors to consider the dignity of the doctrine, the sublimity of the doctrine, and the utility of the doctrine.* "Do you seek," he asks, "abstruse philosophy?—study the beatitudes." "What so hidden," demands St. Bernard, "as that poverty is blessed?—quid tam absconditum quam paupertatem esse beatam? do you seek agreeable study, read the blessing pronounced upon the poor." "Fœlix doctrina," exclaims St. Bernardine of Sienna,† "quæ a beatitudine initium sumit." Hence the writers of the middle ages generally style the monks philosophers, on the principle that their simplicity was philosophy—"simplicitas monachi philosophia est."‡ St. Chrysostom always calls the monastic discipline philosophy, and so it continued to be termed. "How was he not a philosopher," asks Paschasius Radbert, in the ninth century, speaking of St. Adalhard, abbot of Corby; "for wisdom," he continues, quoting the definition of St. Isidore,§ "is the knowledge of human and divine things, with the study of living virtuously. Therefore, without doubt, he who followed the things of God prudently, with God's grace, and did not indolently neglect those of men, was a true philosopher or a wise man, as far as it is lawful to call any man wise."|| Bacchiarius was called by St. Gennadius "vir Christianæ philosophiæ," which only meant, as Mabillon observes, that he was a monk, so generally was that title applied by the ancients to all of the monastic order.¶

Though this may surprise some modern readers, it gave no offence to intelligences of the first order. Paschal would subscribe to such definitions; for he says that the most philosophic part of the lives of Plato and Aristotle was that they lived simply and tranquilly;** in which, assuredly, they might be surpassed by the meanest lay brother of a Franciscan convent. Nor were these views confined to the scholastic doctors and the avowed teachers of religious truth: we find them

* S. Bern. Senens. tom. iii. De Beat. Serm. IV. + Id. iii. s. v.

† Joan. Saris. de Nug. 34.

‡ Isidori Etymolog. Lib. ii. 3.

§ Vita S. Adalh. Mabill. Acta, SS. Ord. Bened. Sec. iv. p. 1.

¶ De Studiis Monasticis, p. 1. ** Pensées, i. 9.

* De Div. Nat. ii. c. 20.

† II. c. 15.

‡ Johan. Scot. i. 452.

§ S. Pet. Ven. Epist. Lib. i. 9. Bib. Cluniacens.

adopted by the illustrious scholars and promoters of secular learning, who were devoted to the explanation of the ancient philosophy. John Picus of Mirandula, writing to Aldus Manutius, and sending a copy of Homer, exhorts him to persevere in philosophic studies, in these terms:—"Accinge ad philosophiam, sed hac lege ut memineris nullam esse philosophiam, quæ a mysteriorum veritate nos avocet; philosophia veritatem quærit; theologia invenit, religio possidet."* Hermolaus Barbarus, indeed, expressly says that he admires him for loving so the simple majesty of the ancient theologians.†

Certainly some of our modern writers will smile to hear the names of the authors most familiar to this philosopher. His nephew, John Francis Picus, says, "Of the ancient doctors of the church he had such a knowledge, that one might suppose he had spent his life in studying them alone; and with the later theologians, who use the style which is called Parisian, he was so familiar, that if any one proposed suddenly any of their most abstruse questions, he used to solve them with such acuteness that you would suppose he had before his eyes all the sayings of that particular doctor in question. Moreover, he was equally conversant with all schools; nor was he addicted to any one in such a manner as to despise the other."‡ Baptist the Mantuan, the Carmelite poet, writes accordingly to Francis Picus Mirandula, on the death of his uncle, saying, "This immortal honour was wanting to your family,—that to the most ancient nobility, the abundance of wealth and military renown, should be added the excellence of so much wisdom,—

"Picus Joannes, cœlos, elementa, Deumque
Doctus, adhuc juvenis, sanctificatus obit."§

Francis Picus of Mirandula, himself no obscure philosopher, writing to Albertus Pius, says of his uncle, "Let us write often to each other; let us converse often on sacred subjects, for by such conversation those who live well are strengthened, and their minds turned, as if wheels, by demons, ill-affected and contaminated, are thus fixed and purified."|| Indeed, it is impossible to read these letters without observing, that in the judgment of their author piety was the true philosophy. All the illustrious men of that time evinced

the same conviction. "Wonder not," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Francis Musano, "that we blend medicine and the lyre with studies of theology; for the body is healed by medicine, the spirit by sounds and odours and songs, and the mind, being divine, by theology."* Writing to Philip Carduccio, he places all philosophy and happiness in charity. "Charity," he says, "rather than science, transfers man to God."† Again in his work *De Christiana Religione*, addressed to Lorenzo the physician, he admits of nothing in philosophy but what is sanctioned by the church. "O happy ages!" he exclaims, "which preserved this divine conjunction of wisdom and religion. O miserable times, whenever there shall be a separation and divorce between knowledge and goodness! If learning be transferred to the profane, it will deserve to be styled an instrument of lasciviousness and malice, rather than science. The most precious pearls of religion left to be treated of by the ignorant, would be trodden under the feet of swine! O men, citizens of a celestial country, and inhabitants of earth! let us deliver philosophy, the sacred gift of God, from impiety if we can; and we can if we wish. I exhort and beseech, therefore, all philosophers to attain to holy religion, and all priests diligently to apply to the study of wisdom.‡

"To the moral notions of the ancients," says another of these eminent philosophers, "we must add the things that belong to a Christian; for our religion is the only true philosophy. Hæc enim sola vera philosophia est, religio nostra; of which not to have the most diligent observance, both on account of itself and also of the expectation of the future world being eternal, while the present is but for a moment, would indicate insanity."§ And again, in another of his works, Cardan says, "It is absurd to suppose that the Christian life is one thing, and the civil life worthy of a philosopher another; for both are one and the same. Therefore if any one should holily fear the precepts of the gospel, he would have in them a great part, nay, generally all of what is required."||

These views of men, in ages of faith, were not the result of vague reverence for religion, and the mere impressions of piety, but the careful and legitimate deductions

* Joan P. Mir. Epist. Lib. i. 6.

† Epist. Lib. ii. 5.

‡ In Vita Ejus.

§ J. F. Pic. Mir. Epist. Lib. i. || Id. Lib. ii.

* Mars. Ficini Epist. Lib. i

† Epist. Lib. vii.

‡ Id.

§ Hieron. Cardan, Prudentia Civilis, cap. lx.

|| De Utilitate ex Adversis Capienda. cap. xxiv.

of a patient and enlightened intelligence. These deep observers were not ignorant of the fact remarked by St. Augustin, that "no one can enter into truth unless by charity," or as a later philosopher observes, that "the religious feeling is the beginning of the development of reason." Doubtless Novalis partook largely of their penetration when he remarked that "pure mathematics are religion, that without enthusiasm, there can be no mathematics, that the highest life is mathematical, that all historical knowledge strives to become mathematical, that the mathematical power is the arranging, ordaining power, that all mathematical knowledge strives to become philosophical, animated, rational—then poetical, afterwards moral, and at last religious."* To such a thinker as Novalis how shallow must appear the declamation of the moderns, reproaching the philosophy of the middle ages as being nothing else but theology! Undoubtedly it may appear strange and obsolete, if the index of intellectual progress be the views of those eminent men of a great northern school, which are accommodated equally to the metaphysical system of the materialists and to that of the partizans of Berkeley†—which leave aside the questions of the immateriality of the mind, the immortality of the soul, the doctrine of a future life, and that of rewards and punishments hereafter. But the name of psychology would never have been applied to such a science in the middle ages. Lately, even in the parliament of France, there has been heard one eloquent voice assuming a higher tone: there has been found a statesman who "would not reduce religious instruction to a lesson on some given day or hour—who would have it administered at all times, that the whole of education should be impregnated with it, that it should be felt as the constant atmosphere of the school." His efforts were in vain; but he was defeated by votes, not by reason, which had pronounced long before, by the mouth of St. Thomas, that "the highest perfection to which man can arrive consists in the full knowledge of God, and that he can obtain it only by the operation and teaching of God who knows perfectly himself."‡ Even the heathen writers had profounder views of the true nature of philosophic study than those who prevailed against the proposed measure

that was conformable to this sentence. Who knows not that the whole character of the philosophy of the eastern nations is that of a divine revelation, formed according to the various fancies of sages?*

Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Antonio Ziliolo Sophronio, reminds him that the whole philosophy of the ancients is nothing but a learned religion. "What shall I say," he adds, "of Mercurius Trismigistus, all whose disputations begin with vows and end with sacrifices?"† "Nisi questio de diis dijudicatur," says Cicero, "in summo errore necesse est homines atque in maximarum rerum ignoracione versari."‡ So far were the ancient philosophers from inclining to the modern opinion, that morality, jurisprudence, and metaphysics can be best established by removing religion from the foundation.

Aristotle reckons theology among the three branches of speculative philosophy, mathematics and physics being the other two;§ and the Pythagoreans said that man being born for contemplation, ought to apply to theological wisdom, *θεολογικῆς σοφίας δὲ ἀντιστοιχεῖν*.|| But above all it is Plato and Socrates, who on this point are in accordance with the scholastic wisdom. If St. Augustin says that science is as it were a certain instrument by which the edifice of charity ought to rise, and that unless it be directed to this end, it avails not, or rather it is greatly injurious to the possessor,¶ Socrates judges of the utility of the sciences, solely by the degree of their tendency to facilitate the search of what is noble and good in morals; and if pursued with any other end, he pronounces them useless.** So far from understanding by philosophy, the study of mechanical arts, which he terms base, or the usual routine in education, which is all concerned, he says, with what is born and subject to perish from depending on the growth or decay of the body, he affirms that the only philosophy which he seeks, is that which can draw the soul from contingencies and time to the essential and immortal existence.†† He shows how philosophy leads to fellowship with the highest things, as being related to what is divine and eternal;‡‡ and he defines a philosopher to be

* Schriften, ii. 235.

† D. Stewart, *Essays*, Prelim. Dis.

‡ S. Thom. q. xiv. De Fide, art. 10.

* Tennemann, *Geschichte der Phil.* 9.

† M. Ficini *Epist.* Lib. viii.

‡ De Nat. Deor. l.

§ Methaphys. Lib. vi.

|| Jamblich. *Adhort. ad Phil.* cap. 4.

¶ *Epist.* 55.

++ Id. Lib. vii.

** De *Repub.* Lib. vii.

‡‡ Ib. Lib. x.

one who always seeks instruction, concerning not ephemeral, perishable things, but the immortal nature.* Truly, as Ventura remarks, when Plato taught that philosophers ought to govern a state, he took care to guard his hearers from a misconception of the men to whom he alluded.

"Are we to regard as philosophers," he asks, "such as pursue the arts of mathematics, and similar studies? By no means. These are only like philosophers."† Philosophy, according to him, is the knowledge and study of God, and a philosopher is the man who withdraws his mind from sensible things to the study of God, which his disciple Plotinus so well understood, that his philosophy seems nothing else but a pure asceticism, or the contemplation of the divine nature. St. Augustin says, "that Plato believed philosophy to consist in the love of God, hoc esse philosophari amare Deum, unde vult esse philosophum amatorem Dei."‡ Hence, we can easily understand why the more mystical of the fathers so greatly loved Plato, who believed that all science and art would sink to the ground, unless referred to God. In reading some of the books of that philosopher, concerning the regulation of the affections, the desire of the chief good, and the union of souls with the Divinity, one might at times forget that the page before the eye is not from the work of some of our ascetical writers. If Plato were again on earth, it is these mystic writings of Catholics, full of divine wisdom, that he would regard as greatly philosophical, and not the frigid and empty treatises on sciences and morals, of men without religion professing to be philosophers;§ some of whom resemble perhaps those who appeared in an early

age of Christianity, who, as St. Augustin tells us, used to call themselves Platonicians, through a shame of being called Christians, lest a name should be common to them with the vulgar.*

The scholastic lights illuminated the depths of the intellectual world, teaching men to remark with Richard of St. Victor, how the philosophy of Christians is in the folly of the cross; for, as he observes, especially against wisdom did he sin who wished to obtain knowledge by robbery. Think, then, if you can, he continues, how just it was in the one, and how pious in the other, who is the wisdom of God, for the Father to avenge the injury of his Son, and for the Son to forgive it; and, as contraries are cured by contraries, mark how fitting and ingenious it was, that he who fell by folly should rise again by wisdom; that he to whom falsehood had been the cause of perdition, might find safety in the way of truth; and that he who incurred death by the word of the devil, might return to life by the word of God.† "Our country is paradise," says St. Gregory, "to which, having seen Jesus, we must, like the Magi, return by a different way from that by which we left it; for we left our own country by being proud, by being disobedient, by following visible things, by tasting forbidden food; but we must return to it by weeping, by obeying, by despising visible things and curbing the appetite of the flesh: for we who departed from the joys of paradise by delectation, are recalled to them by tears."‡ The philosophy of the ages of faith was the return to paradise, it was, therefore; religious, scholastical and ascetic combined, or, in other words, the knowledge and the love of God.

* Ib. Lib. vi.

† Id. Lib. v.

‡ De Civit. Dei, viii. 9.

§ De Methodo Philosophandi, cap. iii. a. 1.

* De Civit. Dei, Lib. xiii. 16.

† Richard. de S. Vict. De Incarnatione Verbi, i. c. xi.

‡ S. Greg. Pap. Hom. X. in Evang.



CHAPTER VIII.

THAT the philosophy of the clean of heart, beholding God, should be exposed to objections from men unpurified, who see only creatures, and who even invent unmeaning terms, to avoid confessing Him who made them ; that it should seem to them defective and false, and that it should be the object also of unwearied and bitter invective, can be a matter of surprise to no one who reflects upon the different relations of truth, and who has been accustomed to trace to their source the various intellectual phenomena presented in the conduct of mankind. Such a result would have reasonably been expected, *a priori*, if it were only from considering the fact which Novalis remarks, that "instinctively the learned are hostile to the spiritual state, and that they must wage a mutual war when they are separated, because they tend to the same place ; for this separation, as he observes, appeared soon after the revolution of the sixteenth century, when men of letters having quarrelled with the scholastic theologians, on being reproved by them for rashly philosophizing, and for adopting pagan language, passed readily over to the side of Luther ;* and in latter times it became still more manifest while so many of the learned were ranking knowledge and faith in opposition to each other.†

Moreover, as this penetrating observer remarks, men have at present various ideas of philosophy, while that of its Catholicity seems by all rejected. One says, philosophy must teach nothing anticonventional, it must chime in with national customs and religions. Another, philosophy must have nothing in common with poetry ; another, it must not be attainable by all minds ; it must have a language of its own, it must have no religion ; thus, every one dresses it up in some form dearest to his own heart. Many change their philosophy as their servants ; at last, they hate all kinds, and choose to have none.‡ There were, how-

ever, besides this, other causes to produce the same impression, for such pains had been taken to misrepresent the whole history of the middle ages, the philosophic writings of the period were known to so few, all works of a theological character being excluded from consideration, that men, whose pursuits had been with science rather than erudition, might naturally fall into the common style of writing respecting them, and, like the illustrious author of a discourse on the history of philosophy, qualify the scholastic period as "the opake of nature and of soul, in which only the perverse activity of the alchemists had, from time to time, struck out a doubtful spark." "If the logic of that gloomy period," says this eminent philosopher, "could be justly described as the art of talking unintelligibly on matters of which we are ignorant, its physics might, with equal truth, be summed up as a deliberate preference of ignorance to knowledge, in matters of every day's experience and use"—a sentence surfeited with truth, for, unquestionably, if the one could be so described with justice, the other might be summed up as this author proposes ; but, unfortunately, for his conclusion, every one who takes the trouble to consult the writings of the schoolmen, perceives that the first step is impossible, and it may be permitted us to hope therefore, that this truly great and impartial observer of nature will be found in future works, when touching upon such ground, to renounce the style of our "family libraries," and adopt in preference the tone of Leibnitz, who, after complaining of the deplorable and almost insuperable aversion of the moderns for the doctrines of the Catholic Church adds, that wise men should endeavour to defend that ancient Catholic philosophy against the new theories of the metaphysicians, who, like children, insult the greatest and most illustrious of men.*

With respect to the charges brought against the philosophers of the middle ages, I know not which to select in first place for consideration, for though numerous

* Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. xvii. 443.

† Schriften, ii. 323.

‡ Novalis Schriften, ii. 134.

• System. Theolog. 234.

they seem to be all brought forward with the same vehemence as being each productive of overwhelming results. Yet, setting aside those which relate to errors in physical science, when fairly met and investigated, the difficulty changes, for then the chief embarrassment arises from inability to discover which is least undeserving of reply. What can the modern objectors expect from a patient hearing of this cause, by men of competent information? Do they think it enough to say in general, that they despise them? Truly, the judges will not see either in their lives or writings, in their deeds, or in their genius, what any reasonable man can despise; Lord Bacon, in praise of Antoninus Pius, says, "that he had the patient and subtle wit of a school-man; a fruit, no doubt, of the exceeding tranquillity and serenity of his mind, which being no ways charged or encumbered either with fears, remorse, or scruples, but having been noted for a man of the purest goodness, without all fiction or affectation, made his mind continually present and entire." Such a comparison does not seem to favour much the modern opinion respecting the characteristic features of the human mind during the reign of scholastic philosophy.

After collecting, however, the accusations of modern writers, we shall find that they may in general be summed up by the contradictory charge that there was no inquiry, and that there was too much inquiry; and both seem advanced occasionally by nearly all modern writers, who approach the subject. "We have found in these ages," says Guizot, "only monuments of an intellectual activity which was merely practical, devoted to the wants of real life, and foreign to the research of truth; this is the state into which the human mind had fallen in the seventh and during the first half of the eighth century." Brown is not satisfied with such limitations, for in his lectures on philosophy, in which he alludes to that of the middle ages, he designates it as being throughout very barbarous and futile. "No beautiful moral speculations," he says, "were then to compensate the poverty of intellectual science." He attempts to show that the questions which agitated the schools, respecting the philosophy of mind, morals, and natural theology, were absurd, and concludes, by applying to them the words of Seneca, *Indignandum de isto, non disputandum est*. We may commence our reply by admitting that the first part of this charge is true, and that

Brown had just grounds for rejecting any limits, since it was at all times true during the ages of faith; so that we may even accept with gratitude the definition proposed by the illustrious author of the history of the inductive sciences, and designate them as "the stationary period," during which, within the sphere of morals and religion, inquiry had altogether ceased.

"Philosophic search," as Tennemann well remarks, "was excluded by the Christian religion, which revealed the will of God." What human reason had so long looked for, was in the Christian doctrine found; and, as St. Irenæus said, "it was useless to seek truth from others, which was easily learned from the Church, in which, as in a treasury, the Apostles had placed all truths, in order that every one who wished might take from it the drink of life."* This was not a thesis of philosophy, a question of science; it was an authoritative promulgation, which required submission not inquiry. So we read of the first disciples, that they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in celebrating the eucharist. Nothing within this sphere could be less open to the genius of inquiry. "Let certainty yield to faith, glory to salvation," it is Tertullian who thus speaks, "faith is the rule. To know nothing against the rule is to know all things; therefore what resemblance between a philosopher and a Christian, a disciple of Greece and one of heaven? a negotiator of fame and one of salvation, an operator of words and one of actions, a builder and a destroyer of things, an interpolator of error and a restorer of truth."† "Unhappy man," exclaims St. Augustin, "who knoweth all these things, and thee alone knoweth not; but blessed is he who knoweth thee, although he should be ignorant of all the rest."‡

The school is but a faithful echo of these voices of the primitive Church. "Non oportet sapientiam querere," says its angel, "nisi in Christo,"§ and elsewhere he uses these remarkable words, "In cruce inveniuntur omnia, de quibus homines gloriari solent."|| "In the cross," he adds, "is the perfection of the whole law, and the whole art of living virtuously: as he who should have a book containing all science, would seek only to know that one book, so also we should no longer seek any thing

* *Advers. Hæres. Lib. iii. c. 4.*

† *Apologet. 46.* ‡ *Confess. v. 4.*

§ *Lect. I. in c. 2. Ep. ad Col.*

|| *Lect. IV. in c. 6. Ep. ad Gal.*

but Christ alone."* The theology of the school was wholly founded on Revelation. "The knowledge of this science," says St. Thomas, "is by Revelation."† Christian philosophers consequently had not to speculate like the numerous inquirers mentioned by Aristotle in his treatise de Anima, and to examine whether the soul were fire or air, whether it consisted in motion or perception, or the negation of body, whether it is called *ῥῆμα*, from warmth, or *ψυχὴν*, from the cold of breathing air. Neither had they to inquire whether the duties of life were such as the laws of God and of the Church required; whether the truths of religion were such as they had received or not. Such continued to be the exemptions of philosophy through the middle ages, without an attempt being made to suppress them.

Behold how many silent adorers in the scholastic halls where Richard and Aquinas sat. Lo, the crucifix, and the image of the Virgin Mother, and the solemn throng with fingers placed upon the lip, to signify that beyond certain limits there is an end of disputation! Here is no place for loquacious speculators; however beautiful may be their theories, their questions are all set at rest, there can be no reviving them. You are indignant? But perpetual, sober, tranquil reason will not participate in your disdain; on the contrary, if, at the spectacle of your mockery, ridiculing the silence which reigns in this monastic region, a wandering fancy, reverting to the tales of old, should liken you to the poet in the shades, who brought a similar charge against his wiser brother, it will prompt a reply resembling that which was given in his defence—"I love that silence; it delights me no less than the eloquence of those who now make speeches."‡

"Fides non in quæstione philosophiæ est," says St. Hilary, "sed in Evangelii doctrina."§ "It would be absurd," says St. Nilus to Alexander the grammarian, "if we, who ascend to the mount of the lofty Christian philosophy, were again to turn back to the darksome valley of vain glory, after the exploded prejudices of the gentiles, and after being perfected in prudence, were to relapse to second childhood, making void the cross through a false philosophy."||

This was the wisdom of the city as well as of the desert, during ages of faith.

"Philosophy seeks truth," says Picus of Mirandula, "Religion finds it." So that in fact, it was the language of the school which Dante heard in Paradise, when Beatrice said—

"——Be not as the lamb,
That, fickle wanton, leaves its mother's milk,
To dally with itself in idle play."*

The Catholic Church, as we shall soon see, accepted the service of philosophy, but utterly rejected all attempts to found truth on any human speculations or discoveries. Men of vast capacity and of brilliant genius might rise up from time to time, and offer to do this, as if by way of imparting to her fresh life and efficiency: she paid them no attention; she wanted none of them. She had already a philosophy complete and perfected. Every thing within her sphere had been determined and arranged ages ago. In that sense, as Clemens Alexandrinus says, "Faith was perfect learning, and nothing was wanting to perfect faith,"† therefore, when it was proposed by any one to supply what he might choose to term a deficiency, by engaging in inquiries which supposed, by the very fact of their institution, that philosophy ought to have a different beginning and a different basis, the only return that he could expect for his proffered service, was a reply like that of St. Paulinus, "Vacat tibi ut philosophus sis, non vacat tibi ut Christianus sis? Verte potius sententiam, et non tam disseras magna quam facias." Her children, in fact, as Paschal says, had no need of such philosophic lectures,‡ no need of these "beautiful moral speculations." "It would be monstrous," says Peter the Venerable, "to dispute at this time of the world, concerning the faith, now that the prince of this world is cast out from the world; now that Christ rules from sea to sea, now that all are made docile to the teaching of God; now that, according to Isaiah, 'the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;' now that Satan, after the long attacks of pagans and the disputation of heretics, hath so exhausted his quiver of iniquity, that there remains to him no longer any arrow that can injure."§ At the time when such words were written, men could hardly have anticipated the arrival of an epoch like that which heard the illustrious Malebranche declaring, "that the readers of

* Lect. I. in c. 2.

† 1 P. Q. l. a. 6. in c. † Ranæ, 917.

§ In Lib. ad Constant. August.

|| Lib. ii. Epist. 43.

* V.

† Pædag. Lib. i. c. 6.

‡ Pensées, i. 11.

§ S. Pet. Ven. Ab. Clun. Epist. Lib. ii. 1.

Descartes should feel a secret joy for having been born in an age and country so happy, that they had not to be at the pains of going back to pagan times and to the extremity of the earth, to seek among barbarians and strangers for a doctor of truth.*

Even, independent of the logical deduction from having clearly established the grounds of wisdom, the inutility and folly of all inquiry, within a certain range of subjects, was generally recognised. "I think," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that divine secrets should be venerated rather than discussed,"† adding elsewhere, "Verius enim invenit amans quam disputans."‡

In ages of faith, men shrunk from engaging in disputation with those idle and sceptical persons, described by St. Augustin, "*Paratiores ad interrogandum, quam capaciores ad intelligendum.*"§ "If the human mind," says he, "would yield to clearest reason, there would not be need for many words: it is true, as we have to combat its irrational motions, there is necessity for more discourse, that we may cause them not only to see but to feel and handle truth. And yet, what end will there be of disquisition, and what limit to discourse, if we think that we must always answer those who answer us? For many speak iniquity and are indefatigably vain, who do not care what they say, provided they can contradict us."|| "Our disputes ought to be prohibited and punished as other verbal crimes," says Montaigne, "we grow angry, first against the reasons, then against the men: we dispute only to contradict; and each one contradicting and being contradicted, the result of the dispute is to lose and annihilate truth."

If Catholic philosophers did not lay such stress upon the evidence of natural reasons, in relation to the great truths concerning human life here and hereafter, it was from their experience of the difficulty of finding in nature what would convince antagonists of this kind, and also from feeling assured that, as Paschal says, "this knowledge, without Jesus Christ, is useless and sterile." When a man had been persuaded of certain immaterial truths dependant on a first truth in which they subsist, and which is called God, they would not have regarded him as far advanced in philosophy, that is, in the work of his salvation. Fenelon speaks the sense of all these ages where he says, "Beware

of those great reasoners who languish over learning, and are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Their curiosity is a spiritual avarice which is insatiable; they are like conquerors who ravage the earth without possessing it."*

"If any one be so curious," said Vincent of Beauvais, "that he seeks not on account of any known cause, but is carried away by the mere love of knowing unknown things, he is to be distinguished from a student, for he is only curious and does not love unknown things, but rather hates them, so as to wish that none should exist, and that all things might be known."† Thus speaks the great encyclopædist of the middle ages. Never, in short, was any conviction more profound, and more generally imparted, than that expressed by Fenelon, that "The mind has no less need of fasting than the body; that it also has its intemperance; that the fast of silence, recollection, and prayer is essential, as is also the cessation occasionally of external action, and whatever distracts the soul"—that intellectual activity, when it is continual and without order, dries up and exhausts the interior,—that it is not enough to act and to give, that one must receive and be nourished, yielding up oneself in peace to every divine impression. "You are too much accustomed to mental application," says that truly wise prelate to one who conversed much with Jansenists, "which leaves your interior void, and prevents you from remembering the secret presence of God. This propensity to argument is greatly to be feared. The people whom you frequent are infinitely dry, argumentative, critical, and opposed to the true interior life. While you listen to them you will hear only an interminable reasoning and a dangerous curiosity, which will insensibly withdraw you from grace to cast you back upon your own nature. Make then your greedy mind fast, make it keep silence, lead it to rest.—*Requiescite pusillum.* God will then work more within it—If you will always be at work, you will not leave him liberty to act. O it is dangerous to be a busy-body in the interior life! *Vacate, et videte quoniam ego sum Deus.*—That is the true Sabbath of the Lord. This cessation of the soul is a great sacrifice."

These thoughts unfold at once the gulf which separates the men of ages of faith from those of the modern intellectual cultivation. The immense distance is appa-

* *Recherche de la Vérité*, Lib. vi.

† *De Sacramentis*, Lib. ii. p. viii. c. 3.

‡ Hugo S. Vict. de *Ecclesiast. Officiis*, ix.

§ *De Civit. Dei*, xv. 1.

|| *Id. Lib. ii. c. 1.*

* *Epit.* 20.

† Vinc. Bell. *Speculum Doctrinale*, Lib. i. c. 25.

rent from these words. And now, again, a painful task devolves upon us; for I do not see how, in justice to men that are gone by, we can avoid throwing a glance at the opponents of the school around us, who pursue the study of philosophy, in order to ascertain whether their operations tend to invalidate the judgment of the "Stationary Period." Sooth, if the love of inquiry and the thirst of knowledge and the confidence of a personal illumination were sufficient for the purposes of philosophy, there would be no ground at present for complaint. Where is there a door closed against the speculator who promises to give the last touch to reformation? Where are there not triumphs prepared for those who, as St. Augustin says, are indefatigably vain? At present, as in Plato's time, one might justly affirm that "if those who wish to taste of every science, and who go anxiously to all places of instruction, and who are insatiable in following teachers, are to be styled philosophers, there will be a vast crowd of such philosophers;" and truly we might add, too, with Glaucus, "many of them strange kind of men—*ἄστοροι*." For in this class must then be reckoned all frequenters of spectacles, and all lovers of rumour and of hearing lessons, who let out their ears for hire, never failing to attend on every occasion in cities and villages, whenever any thing is going forward. Socrates, however, replies that these men are not to be styled philosophers, for they have only some resemblance to philosophers—*ἀλλ' ὁμοίους μὲν φιλοσόφους*. But that real philosophers are those who love the spectacle of truth—*τοὺς τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας*.*

St. Clement of Alexandria remarks, that the Greeks themselves used to call their busy inquisitive sages sophists, and cites the words of Sophon the poet, and also of Cratinus,—

οἷον σοφιστῶν σμήνος ἀνεδιδήσατε.†

These were, however, the men of most reputation, and the most successful in realizing a fortune.

Protagoras, the famous sophist, having arrived in Athens, Hippocrates, the son of Apollodorus, came running before light to awaken Socrates and inform him of the circumstance. He knocked, and came rushing in, crying with a loud voice, "Socrates, are you asleep or awake?—Protagoras is come! He arrived late last night, and I

would have hastened to inform you, but that it was night before I could reach you; so the moment I awoke from first sleep I came hastening to you." "What," replies Socrates, "has Protagoras done you any injury?" "Nay," replies the youth, laughing; "but, O Socrates! he alone is wise, and to learn of him I would expend my all, and all the wealth of friends; and I have come to beg that you will speak to him concerning me, and persuade him to make me wise also. It is true I have never seen him and never heard him, for I was a child at the time of his former visit to Athens; but, O Socrates! all men praise him, and say that he is the most able of sophists. But why do we not fly to him, that we may find him within? Let us go." "My good fellow," replies Socrates, "let us not go, for it is very early, but let us wait here until it be light, and then let us go; for Protagoras stays much within: so take courage; we shall probably find him at home." On arriving, they find the door shut. The porter, a certain eunuch, was oppressed with the multitude of sophists who used to come to the house; so that when they knocked, he opened angrily, and looking at them, said, "Umph! some sophists! He is not at leisure." And so saying, with both hands he violently shut the door. Again they knocked, and he replied without opening the door, "Did you not hear, men, that he is not at leisure?" "But, O good man!" the strangers replied, "we have come desiring to see Protagoras. We are not sophists ourselves: therefore announce our arrival." Soon afterwards the man opened the door.*

A scene like this would not be strange, at present, in Paris or in London, where something similar is passing every day; only with this difference, that instead of there being only one Socrates to look on, there are as many Socrateses as there are Catholics, conscious of their own position, or men already weary of the spectacle of human errors.

St. Augustin had heard great things of the eloquence of Faustus the Manichæan. "Only wait till you hear him," was the general advice he received. Disappointment, however, was his impression when the sophist had spoken. St. Augustin was then in his twenty-ninth year, and, as a French writer remarks, at that age one has generally discovered the vanity of the word of man.

Not to proceed with observations which will be called for when we come to speak of

* De Repub. Lib. v.

† Stomat. i. 3.

* Plato, Protag.

the method of philosophy in ages of faith, one may deplore here the necessity which so many have created for themselves of returning to those inquiries, concerning every duty and the foundation of all our hopes, from which the human mind had been long so happily delivered. "O Christ, it is too true! thy eclipse is very dark," exclaims Lamartine; but he should have added, to those who must seek the cause of it in themselves. The earth, indeed, has cast its shadow upon many. "We walk," as he observes, "in an age when every thing falls with a great crash. The dust of twenty centuries, in their overthrow, covers every thing; darkness and light float confusedly before our eyes; one cries, lo! truth is in the city; and another, lo! it is in the wilderness."

In what do the moderns agree? In philosophy separated from religion, pursued as an independent study; systems are opposed to systems, theories overthrow theories, opinions and principles destroy each other. True there are inquiries enough, but of what nature? "Some questions," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "are worthy of being punished, such as that which demands proof of a Providence; since it is manifest, from the aspect of all visible things, that there is a Providence.*" On this principle there would be more need of a censor than of a logician, in some modern schools. It is the tribunals which can best attest what has been learned from these giants, these impious sons of earth, who like madmen turn one another to ridicule, each thinking himself exclusively in possession of truth. No, it is a vain boast of Tiedman, "that the history of philosophy offers us a perspective of consolation and joy, and that the human reason once awakened has never retrograded, but advanced without ceasing;" for the amount of all is only that men have endeavoured to revive the ancient impieties, which time, the enemy of error, had destroyed. Indeed, the same author refutes himself, and confesses, a little before, that it presents "a miserable and tearful spectacle." Who can enumerate the sects which now exist in philosophy? Nor does Degerando supply a more cheering picture of its condition. Tiedman himself complains that the great men of these latter times have left incomplete many things relative to first notions and principles, and that sufficient care has not been taken to determine the foundations of the structure. What Seneca says of theories in his day may be applied

* Stromat. Lib. v.

to the grand investigations and beautiful speculations which Professor Brown prefers to the scholastic philosophy. "They are not a remedy for the soul, but an exercise for the wit;" serving, as Cicero says, not to utility, but only to amuse the mind. "All their disputation," he says, "seems to have conferred no benefit upon men, but only delectationem quamdam otii;" or, as Lactantius says, they did not dispute that they might teach, sed ut se oblectent in otio. After many reformations in philosophy, came the Wolfian reformation, which was soon left to be reformed by others; and at length, after three centuries of reformations, Degerando now says that a new thorough reformation is absolutely necessary, for that as yet it has never been effected.

Really, if we were to ask what is found at present in these regions of philosophy, that are said to be mystical and spiritual, and not Catholic, the reply might be made, without satiric exaggeration, in the words of Trugæus, who says, on his return from the sky, that he had found nothing but

ψυχὰς δὲ ἡ τρεῖς διθυραμβοδιδασκάλων.*

What do I see in this land of independent choosers? Truly, as contrasted with what we have left in the regions of philosophy, sanctified and illumined by the Catholic faith, I do not know how one could better qualify it than in the words of the ancient poet, which express what Bacchus and Xanthus saw on first reaching the shores of the dead,—

——— σκότον καὶ βόρβορον———

mud and darkness.

If these philosophers were to be asked by one of the old holy fathers of the monastic order what they have done for men, they could not reply more to the purpose than by imitating the style of the poet in the shades,—"We have taught them to vote, to cry Hear and Hip; to say, I am free to confess; to ask, Will it pay? is there good security? to distinguish, in metaphysics, the I-hood and the not-I-hood—in diplomacy, non-intervention and co-operation. Alas! we cannot expect that they will confess, what is equally true, that they have rendered them independent of all morality, but what each man's passion dictates—fond of fame and revolution—that they have put it into the heads of young men to drink poison, and smother themselves with charcoal, and cut their own throats, in rivalry of Brutus, to show their

* Aristoph. Pax, 829.

hate of kings. The conclusion might be in the sentence of the church at Lauds, on the fourth feria,—“*Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia : gloriantes ; recedant vetera de ore vestro, quia Deus scientiarum Dominus est.*”

But let us return to ages of faith, and examine whether it be indeed a fact that an end was put to all inquiry ; for though unquestionably men did not then philosophize with a view to discover religious and moral truths, there are innumerable testimonies which seem utterly at variance with such an opinion. What ! were there no inquiries, no beautiful investigations, when we are told by Hugo of St. Victor that “the whole life of man was in question ?” and that “as long as he lives he inquires ? No one wishes to be deceived,” he continues, “not even those who may wish to deceive. This shows that nothing is more proper to the heart of man than truth ; but the perverse seek truth where there is not salvation.”*

“Christianity, in its origin,” as Staudenmaier observes, “did not indeed assume a scientific form. The Divine Spirit manifested its power first in producing a divine life ; but it was in the natural order of things, and certainly not repugnant to its divine object, that this life should subsequently become the subject of reflections and abstractions, when from without, after various struggles, the minds of men penetrated deeper into it, and demanded what it was.” That there was no indifference, in the middle ages, with regard to such discussions, is clear from the fact of the predominance of the scholastic philosophy.

The admonitions of Hugo de St. Victor show that there was even need of warning men from passing beyond the proper limits of inquiry. “Many are the questions of men,” saith he ; “so long as they live they always inquire. Would that they were as studious to seek goodness as they are curious to discover truth ! It is common to all men to seek truth, even to those who love not goodness. Many seek truth without goodness, but goodness is the companion of truth. Truth comes not readily without goodness ; or if it come, it does not come from those parts where is salvation. Men inquire whether their sins return to them after having been forgiven, if they again fall ; they wish to know the evil, but they do not wish so much to avoid it.”† Many things can be asked, if all things ought to

be asked which can be asked. You ask about the state of the soul, on leaving the body. All these things are fit subjects for fear, rather than for inquiry.* You ask what becomes of the body of Christ ? Such are the thoughts of man, that can hardly rest in those things where least of all there should be inquiry.† Again, you say, if I am to love one man as myself, then I must love three or four men more than myself. Such are the questions of men, and thus do they disquiet themselves with their cogitations.‡ St. Anselm says, that questions respecting the foundations and the mysteries of our faith are often proposed, not only by the learned, but also by the illiterate. “De qua quæstione,” he says, alluding to the doctrine of the incarnation, “non solum literati sed etiam illiterati multi quærunt, et rationem ejus desiderant.”§ Cardinal Ximenes, amidst all his multiplied cares, had a custom of having philosophical questions proposed at dinner and supper, on which the learned men who always surrounded him disputed.|| The custom even prevailed in some houses of secular nobles.

“The feudal times,” says a modern author, “were a memorable epoch of ardent discussions and of prodigious research.”¶ Nothing but ignorance can induce an unprejudiced person to have a different opinion. In the fifth as well as in the nineteenth century, the maxim of apostolic men has been, “Catholicism has every thing to hope and nothing to fear from the advancement of philosophy.” It checked not, it solicited discussions ; and Dante does but use the language of the Church in making Beatrice reply, “The thirst of knowledge high whereby thou art inflamed to search the meaning of what here thou seest, the more it warms thee pleases me the more.”** But what were the men, and what were the discussions ? Here, again, error is widely spread.

John Picus of Mirandula will be observed, I suppose, to rank among those who were no mean judges of intellectual merit ; and he alludes to Albert the Great in this style : —“Albertus noster, non minus profecto doctrina quam cognomento magnus.”†† Hear how he writes to Hermolaus Barbarus : —“It sometimes shames and grieves me to think of my studies, and of the years which

* Hugo S. Vict. de Sacramentis, Lib. ii. p. xvi. c. 2. † Id. ii. p. viii. c. 13.

‡ Id. ii. p. xiii. c. 10.

§ Cur Deus Homo, Lib. i. cap. 1.

|| Wad. An. Minor. tom. xvi.

¶ Tableau Hist. des Sciences Occultes, Introduction.

** Par. xxx.

†† Apolog.

* Hugo S. Vict. Erudit. Theolog. ex Miscellan. Lib. i. 72.

† Hugo S. Vict. de Sacramentis, Lib. ii. xiv. c. 9.

I should have better spent with Thomas, John Scot, and Albert, who lived renowned in their age, and who will live hereafter, not in the schools of grammarians and pedagogues, but crowned in the assemblies of the lovers of wisdom.*

"Say, I pray you, what moves and persuades more powerfully than such writers? They agitate, they carry one away with violence. You see rude and rustic words, but living, but animating, but words that penetrate like darts of fire into the most secret depths of your soul. You say this is barbarous Latinity: this is not Latin, not Roman style. But what hinders, if these philosophers, whom you call barbarous, should have conspired to follow a certain law of speaking? Is it not, then, equally holy with them as the Roman law is with you? Is not this imposition of names arbitrary? Anacharsis makes a solecism with the Athenians; but the Athenians are guilty of the same with the Scythians. In money we do not seek what is the device, but what is the substance; nor would any one exchange pure gold bearing a Teutonic image for base alloy stamped with a Roman symbol. As Cato says, '*Vivere sine lingua possumus forte non commode—sed sine corde nullo modo possumus.*' Lucretius writes *de Natura, de Deo, de Providentia*. Let any one of ours write on the same—let John Scot write on it: the one will tell you that atoms are the principles of things—that all things happen by chance; but this he says in Latin, and with elegance. John says what nature attests; but he says it rudely, not in Latin words. Who will, nevertheless, hesitate between them?"†

"Those who now philosophize," says Benedict Accolti Aretinus, "have neglected eloquence, to which the ancients devoted themselves, but not the less have they studied truth. What great masters, within the last four hundred years, have France, Italy, Germany, and Spain produced? What more noble than the schools of philosophers and theologians in Paris, and in some cities of Italy and Spain? Nor do I know to what ancient philosopher, except Plato and Aristotle, Albertus Magnus and blessed Thomas can be compared—who wrote so many things, as if they had never taken rest—so subtilly and copiously investigated all things, that nothing seems to have been hidden from them which the human mind can acquire. Giles of Rome, John

Scot, Alexander de Hales, Bonaventura, Francis Maro, Jacobus Forliviensis, Blase of Parma, Ugo of Sienna, Paul the Venetian, and Loysius, Marsilius, Innocent V., and Benedict XI., Hugo the Dominican, and John Dominicus, and many others, were all princes of philosophy; nor in the wisdom of sacred theology do the moderns yield to the first doctors of the church, unless to Augustin, who by a certain divine genius surpassed all others. But the moral or mystic senses of the Scriptures, and their admirable abundance, these deliver still better. Nor would I dare to say this, unless I found it was the opinion of the most learned in these arts, to whom I think, on account of their prodigious erudition, faith must be yielded."* Angelo Politian speaks of Tertullian with admiration.† Indeed, he might well do so, in spite of Gibbon's sneers; and how well did these great men appreciate St. Augustin, who, as Michelet remarks, is an entire world in himself.

"Who will fear to oppose to Plato Augustin?—Thomas, Albert, and Scot to Aristotle?" It is no less learned a philosopher than Francis Picus of Mirandula who speaks. "How many questions," he continues, "were disputed and exhausted by them which he never touched? The truths of both testaments warmed them, of which he knew nothing. Who doth not perceive that Lactantius equals or perhaps excels Cicero in eloquence? But what shall we say of the rhetorical power of Jerome? Whoever has read him need not be told what that is. I omit Cyprian, Rufinus, Ambrose, Paulinus, Augustin, Severus, Hilary, Leo, and many others, who are equal to the ancient orators; and if we regard that part of philosophy more especially which embraces practice, how far are the Gentiles surpassed by our men who have written sums of theology—Alexander, Thomas, Henry, Albert, and, above all, Gregory, in his Commentary on the Book of Job?"‡

Such were the views of the great Italian scholars of the fifteenth century. Let us even hear men at open variance with the school. "As for myself," says Heinsius, "I confess I gladly study Gregory the theologian, in whose writings eloquence and erudition contend with religion; and I never feel such an elevation of mind as when I read his account of the life and

* Bend. Accolti Aretini de *Præstantia Virorum sui ævi* Dialog. Theas. Antiq. Ital. IX.

† Ang. Politian. Epist. iv.

‡ J. F. P. Mirand. de *Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philosophiæ*, Lib. i. cap. 7.

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. Epist. Lib. i. 4.

† Id.

studies and death of Basil.* Basil and Gregory are my delights, of whom I cannot but admire—in the one such great facility with care, and in the other such mighty force of language with piety. I see the gentle eloquence of Theodoret, his simple candour in interpreting without any ambition, a full and nervous body of erudition in confuting error, and a great knowledge of antiquity. What shall I say of the force of Tertullian, of the vast erudition of Clemens, of the tragic buskin of Hilary, of the candour and facility of Chrysostom, of the digressions sweeter than honey, of the acute and powerful disputations of an Augustin;—what of the exact industry of a Jerome, or of the diffuse and truly Ciceronian eloquence of a Lactantius;—what of my ancient loves, that sweetest Bernard, or that first Leo, who poured forth as many divine apophthegms as he uttered sentences?"†

Now with the ancient fathers the school-men were thoroughly imbued. One can never be sure, in reading Henry of Ghent, whether the sentence be his own, or one of Augustin or Chrysostom. Their merit, therefore may be judged of from that one observation; and in fact, "from the vast range of European literature during the middle ages," says a modern historian, "it would not be difficult to select works which, for invention, might confer honour on the noblest of our poets, and which, for depth of thought and acuteness of reasoning, have not since been equalled by the most celebrated of our philosophers."‡ Staudenmaier remarks, that in the writings of John Scot we find not only the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Clemens of Alexandria, and Augustin, but also those of Leibnitz, Schelling, Hegel, Baader, and other illustrious men of modern times; his genius being not that of an individual, but rather that of humanity itself. He embraced the whole middle ages, and united in harmony within himself both the scholastic philosophy and mysticism. He is an Anselm in mind, a Bernard in feeling; he was not of any one age, but he embraced all times.§ But it is asked, what was the object of their discussions? were not their abilities misapplied? Truly I am astonished to hear such an opinion advocated by men professing the true wisdom. In the first place, what error

of ancient or of the present times opposed to the Catholic philosophy was not then considered and refuted? "The cunning and impatient race of heretics who disturb the peace of the saints are of this use," says St. Augustin, "that in order to defend the Catholic faith against them, many things are considered more diligently, understood more clearly, and more constantly preached."* When Luther and his peers arose, they were unable to broach a single opinion which had not been long before philosophically as well as theologically weighed and found wanting. The arguments against the Catholic rule of faith, against the supremacy of Rome, against indulgences, against the religious orders, against the doctrine of the blessed Eucharist,—all had, ages before, been calmly heard and solidly refuted. Again, the Monologium, Prosologium, and the treatise Contra Inipientem of St. Anselm, in which he brings the most clear and elaborate proof of the existence of God, will show how well that age was defended against atheists. The anonymous monk of Ratisbon, whose book on his temptations and various fortunes was published by Mabillon, unfolds for refutation thoughts which are the secret of much infidelity at the present day:† and in their general expositions of the Christian doctrine, for every step they took care to have such ground as was admitted by all kinds of adversaries; so that the disciple says to St. Anselm, "You have so proved the doctrine of the incarnation, that if a few things were removed from our books, such as concerning the Trinity and Adam, you have satisfied the reason, not alone of Jews, but also of pagans."‡

The objections of modern infidels, taking in a gross literal sense the figurative and imperfect expressions of theologians in relation to God, are all answered in advance by the Master of the Sentences, Peter Lombard.§

Guizot, after censuring the form and connection of the books of the middle age, admits that they are very remarkable monuments of the activity and richness of the human mind. "We find in them," he says, "many vast and original views: questions are often solved by them in their profoundest depths; the light of philosophical truth, of literary beauty, shines out each instant. The vein is covered in the mine, but it contains much metal, and deserves to be worked."||

* Heinsii Orat. IX. † D. Heinsii Orat. VIII.

‡ Lardner, Cab. Encycl. Hist. of Mid. Age, iv. 316.

§ Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft, seiner Zeit. 39.

* De Civ. Dei, xvi. 2.

† Vetera Analect. 108.

‡ Cur. Deus Homo. 22.

§ Lib. i. dist. xlv.

|| Cours d'Hist. Mod. vol. i. 220.

The scholastic rind is ridiculed, but, after all, as Staudenmaier says, "the form of dialogue in which so many of these works are written is philosophy itself—the inward alternate speech of the speculative spirit, which at the same time is moved by the most powerful feeling. Truth produces itself before our eyes, by a living process; and through this dramatic style these works have that air of perpetual freshness which imparts to them an eternal youth."*

Truly, notwithstanding what has been so often repeated respecting the barbarism and folly of the scholastic disputes by men who seem practically to regard no questions of importance, but such as affect the pleasure and profit of animal life, nothing can shake my conviction that it was a sublime spectacle to behold the scholastic crowd in the Gothic halls of the monastery of the middle ages, where debate was held concerning the awful and magnificent subjects which are presented by religion to the contemplation of man. Some idea of the impression which it could produce upon the youth assembled can be formed by those who have lately heard the lectures in the college of St. Stanislaus at Paris, before the studious disciples of that house, and the philosophers and poets who gained admittance to hear them.

What noble and sublime speculations were pursued in humble dependence and submission to the authority of God's word! It is an honourable contest of those who love not themselves, but truth; it is a splendid disputation; there is nothing contrary to purity and decorum, nothing ignoble of turpitude and shame, nothing involved or tortuous. Compare the questions and distinctions of Peter Lombard with those of Plato and Cicero, and how dry, wearisome, and unprofitable seem all the speculations of the heathen philosophers in comparison. The style of the latter may be more pure—it is, of course, classical; but what superior majesty and grace in the conceptions of the Christian disputants! How much more extensive, too, was the field open to them, and with what ardour and with what subtlety did they cultivate it! Assuredly the monastic school suffers not in comparison with the spots where Plato taught.

Do you desire sublime subjects, profound discussions, conducted at least in the solemn and impressive language which belongs to earnestness and conviction? Where can

you be satisfied if you do not find them in the meditations of St. Anselm, or in the hints for meditation suggested in innumerable treatises by St. Bonaventura, so admirable for the order, and precision, and depth of the thoughts? Such as where he shows the sevenfold ascent of the soul of man, from meditating on the passion of Jesus, the two modes of ascent by the gift of wisdom and understanding, the ascent by the gift of counsel, the ascent by the gift of fortitude, the ascent by the gift of knowledge, the ascent by the gift of piety, the ascent by the gift of fear; the development of which propositions, in most affecting language, forms a perfect epitome of the whole Christian wisdom.*

What philosophy in the numerous treatises, in form of dialogues, composed by Honorius Augustodunensis, the ardent disciple of St. Anselm, or in the profound disquisitions of Hugo de St. Victor, on the origin of evil,† or in the treatise of St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, than which perhaps the human mind has never produced anything more sublime? The most subtle objections that can be proposed against the Christian doctrines are here stated, almost in the very terms of the late French infidels, and refuted with an admirable power of dialectics. An age which had only heard the questions of Hugo of St. Victor on St. Paul's Epistles, or the sublime meditations of Richard, his great disciple, on the doctrines of faith, could never have been justly accused of shunning deep and useful investigations.

What high questions respecting the mysteries of creation do we find in the works of Duns Scotus? The infidels of our age would there find some of their own interrogations, and would be invited to consider "*Utrum Deus possit aliquid creare?*" as if the first cause were sometimes more determinate to producing an effect than at others, and not always the same immediately.‡

How far behind are many at present in their reasoning, forgetting those who, with Hugo of St. Victor and Boethius, knew that neither is foreknowledge the cause of things nor are things the cause of foreknowledge, as otherwise, what is temporal would be the cause of what is eternal, and that foreknowledge is improperly ascribed to God, as in him nothing is future, nothing past, since his knowledge can neither be

* Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit. 482.

• Stimul. Div. Amoris, p. 1. cap. 7.

† Summæ Senten. Tract. iii.

‡ Duns Scoti Lib. ii. Sent. Dist. 1. 9. 2.

increased nor diminished.* How admirable again their manner of reconciling liberty with grace, saying with St. Augustin, "Tanto liberior quanto sanior: tanto sanior quanto divinæ gratiæ subjectior."† The importance of such views will appear from observing the evils which have arisen in later times, from false opinions on the subject which they involve.

What shall I say of the Angel of the School? Truly those who have drunk deep of his wisdom will prefer smiling in silence, to any apology before the bar of those who now arraign him. Pope John the twenty-second said that his wisdom was itself miraculous. "Wondrous truly it is," says Anthony Possevin, "how rich and fruitful was his mind, how perspicuous on every subject, how full of divine and human philosophy."‡

But take others, open Henry of Ghent and read all the first part of his sum, and then say whether, in the middle ages, He, who did provide Augustin of his lore, had not raised up men competent to follow even that renowned doctor of the Church, treating on the nature of the soul.§

But in all the great luminaries of the School there are important questions, there are just, profound views, there is logical power, there is vast erudition! It is not dreams or vanities of men, or fables of poets, or speculations of tradesmen that they will explain. You will hear the voice of wisdom, the traditions of the friends of God in all ages of the world, illustrations, admonitions, precepts. They dispute concerning nature and the immortality of the soul; they dispute on the contempt of death, which they saw daily before their eyes; they dispute like the illustrious professor who has lately amazed our metropolis|| on the light which science throws upon religion. To use the words of a recent historian, "we may ransack in vain the whole realm of philosophy for more profound disquisitions into the nature and relations of things."¶ And indeed if these scholastic philosophers were again to come on earth, they might address the moderns in Cicero's words, and say "When we hear your lectures we are surprised that you should thus disdain us." Nobis enim ista quæsitæ, à nobis descripta, notata, præcepta sunt; omniumque rerumpublicarum

rectiones, genera, status, mutationes, leges etiam et instituta ac mores civitatum perscripsimus. Eloquentiæ vero, quæ et principibus maxime ornamento est, et qua te audivimus valere plurimum, quantum tibi ex monumentis nostris addidisses?*

In truth, how do the subjects of our disquisitions fade before the sublime grandeur of their accustomed themes,—the origin of evil, the fall of man, original sin? The very titles of their books are pregnant with thought: "Liber unde malum" is that of one of the volumes left to the monastic library of Durham, by the bishop, Hugh Pudsey, in the twelfth century: those prefixed to the books of Richard of St. Victor are alone enough to put to shame the modern philosophy. Then what profound wisdom, what piercing views into the secrets of nature, yea, even what an atmosphere of poetry do we find whenever we assist at their debates? And remark too, how it is only in the Catholic schools that such questions can be discussed with serenity and joy, for that which reveals God to the clean of heart, covers other men with darkness, with cold impenetrable gloom.

— βορβόρον θ' ὕδωρ

λαμπρόν μαινῶν, οὐ ποθ' εὐρήσεις ποτόν.†

—if you mix earth with the limpid source, you will find no remedy for your thirst.

Milton felt this, and therefore, in describing Satan and his cursed crew, he appoints to them as a punishment the exercises of the school.—

"Others apart sat on a hill retired

In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Of good and evil much they argued, then
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion, and apathy, and glory, and shame."

Milton had conversed with the new instructors, and had heard their vain wisdom and false philosophy, which, from the tongue of Calvin and his followers, could blasphemously ascribe despair to God, and envelope, with clouds of old and new delusions, points at which more wise than they had erred: Dante, on the contrary, had been long an ardent disciple in the Catholic school, where, as Marsilius Ficinus remarks of the question of predestination, "Love was made to solve all problems, for what more voluntary than love? and yet

* De Finibus, Lib. iv.

+ Eumen. 694.

* Hugo of S. Vict. Sum. Sentent. Tract. I. 12.

† Ep. ad Hilar.

‡ Appar. Sac. 2.

§ In his Xth book, De Trinitate.

|| Dr. Wiseman.

¶ Hist. of Mid. Ages, Lardner, Cyclop.

what more necessary?"* Thus the reason of their having formed such different notions of controversy is explained.

Certainly the former must have conducted these inquiries in a strange manner to suggest such an idea to the philosophic mind of one who loved them. The theological questions which the Protestant poet appoints as a task for the damned in hell, are deemed by the bard of Catholic ages, as an exercise for the blessed not unworthy paradise. Indeed Catholic philosophers expressly ascribed the triumphs of their poets to their having imbibed the spirit and even the language of the school. "Dante is grand and sublime! What marvel," continues John Picus of Mirandula, "since philosophizing, nature compels him to be so when treating on God, on the soul, on the blessed, and repeating what Thomas, what Augustin wrote concerning them, whose writings he so frequently studied with assiduity, deeply meditating on them? It was not so admirable in Dante to have done this, as it would have been shameful not to have done it. If he flieth sublime it is the wings of the subject which carry him on high."†

But it is time to cut short this part of our discourse, and indeed there are moments when one might be inclined to think that such defence is superfluous; since those who are considered by many as at the head of the social progress, are beginning to reject philosophy with defiance, on the very ground that the results of the habits which it engenders are favourable to what they consider ancient superstition, and inconsistent with the kind of civilization which they wish to propagate. Philosophy, poetry, and literature, are regarded by them with disgust as anti-revolutionary, and therefore, in their estimation, as degrading to the nature of man. Both in Germany and France many writers are found professing hopes that they may live to see men become wilder, and a conviction that in the rudeness of a savage state must be looked for the ultimate reform and triumph of humanity. Such views are not perhaps so novel or so unconnected with the religious revolution of the sixteenth century as we might at first suppose: but I have not time to investigate this point.

Let us return to the more common objections against the scholastic philosophy.

We are told that the ingenuity of

its disputants was generally exercised in strange and puerile subtilties, but though this is not the occasion which I shall choose for showing the contrary, one cannot I think hear the charge without perceiving that what is brought forward to shame them must at once turn to their praise; for if the speculations of St. Thomas are sometimes spun fine, and if his divisions run to niceties, this was the fault of the speculative refining genius of the Arabians whom he had undertaken to pursue and confute throughout their whole system: and besides these "strange and puerile subtilties" are not the general but the occasional exercise of scholastic writers. If it be asked, why did it become so at all? I would answer, let the moderns reply who are obliged to return to the pagan disputations, from the need of which the scholastic philosophers felt themselves delivered. Let those repeat the objection who have contributed, all over Europe, to the solemn opening of debates, which shake the first elements of all human knowledge, and the very foundation and security of social life.

That neglect of the higher objects of knowledge, which Tennemann ascribes to the scholastic philosophy, was the result of a conviction that those higher objects, having been already established by revelation, were beyond the proper sphere of its researches; and if this writer finds, under the yoke of authority, insipidity, a spirit of minuteness in dissection and division, he admits having found also there "a dialectic exercise of reason, quickness, and subtilty of thought, extension of the sphere of dogmatical metaphysics, ingenious and acute explanation of the theological ideas, and a deep speculative spirit."*

The ancient sages would not have deemed the subtle investigations of the school unphilosophical, for Pythagoras expressly recommended to his disciples an intent and unwearied examination of difficult speculations, and a ruminating upon them.† In fact, the insignificance of the subject itself sometimes chosen by the scholastics, only proves their conviction, that it was not expedient to treat important truths in that manner, or decorous to exercise the argumentative faculty upon points that were of faith. In the school, indeed, occasionally we hear of things that do almost mock the grasp of thought, but in general,

* Mars. Ficin. Epist. Lib. i. ad Joan. Cavalcanti
† Joan. Pic. Mirand. Epist. Lib. i. 3.

* Geschichte des Phil.
† Jamblich. de Pythagoric. vita, cap. 16.

what after all were these subtle questions? It might be for a Hugo of St. Victor, in treating of the vanities of the world, to speak ironically of the very important topics on which some scholastics were then vehemently disputing, but assuredly the same privilege cannot, with any justice, be assumed by the authors of frivolous and interminable disquisitions, the meaning of which they cannot themselves, perhaps, comprehend a few months after they have held them,—to whose books every sober mind might devoutly wish such an end as befel two of Cardan's treatises, as he relates with a truly ridiculous gravity.* Is it, I ask, for such men to cry down the ingenious inquiries of the middle ages, which all were concerning, more or less, matters of the utmost interest to the spiritual life, and to the wisdom of thoughtful learned Christians?

Unquestionably, many things seem obscure and involved to the minds of men without moral discipline, which were luminous to the clean of heart. "The mind, reverting still to things of earth," as Dante saith, "strikes darkness from true light."† The observation which concludes the work entitled *Theologia Germanica*, bespeaks indulgence on this very ground.—"If any one should say that these things are very abstruse, he should be reminded that the great folly of the Holy Spirit, to speak so, is far more abstruse than the highest wisdom of the whole world. It is not strange, therefore, that these things should seem abstruse to the flesh, for they are divine, of which the flesh cannot judge, and therefore, you judge them abstruse in the same manner as a bat would deny that it could see the brightness of day from being accustomed to use the light of night, of which the brightest part is darker than the darkest day." Dante discerned well the cause, and says—

"The Spirit to his poem added things
I understood not, so profound he spake;
Yet not of choice, but through necessity
Mysterious; for his high conception soar'd
Beyond the mark of mortals."‡

At the same time be it observed, no abstruse or subtle discussions were ever held before the people. St. Augustin had shown that it was well and useful sometimes to be silent respecting some truth, on account of the incapacity of hearers; "especially," he added, "if there be cause to fear that we may render those men worse who do

not understand us, while we wish to render those who do understand more learned, who, if we were to remain silent, might not, indeed, become more learned, but neither would they become worse."* And with respect to other points, really it was somewhat over bold for the teachers of the new religions to think that they were the men justly authorised to convict the scholastics of being unphilosophical.

The questions of the school, in what they are pleased to term the dark ages, were certainly rather of a more metaphysical nature than those which agitated two great nations, under the light of the reformers, when the portentous discussions were, whether the clergy ought to wear linen surplices and caps, whether steeples ought to be surmounted with weather-cocks or crosses, whether a table should stand in the middle of the church or altarwise with one side to the wall, whether a good Christian should stand up or sit down at the *Gloria Patri*; on all which points "their Cathedral men" would never yield one iota: but if the scholastic questions did not lead to such practical results, for these were sufficient to kindle the flames of civil war, at least the laws of God and men had no more reason to fear the disputations of the Scotists and Thomists, than the human intelligence had to apprehend injury or dishonour from inquiring whether the essence of the mind were distinct from its existence, or whether the Deity can love a possible unexisting angel better than an actually existing insect.

To take the speculations of scholastic disputants and to present them to a corrupt society, with all their possible practical consequences eloquently set forth, was the act indeed of a man of genius, but perhaps, to say the least, an act of the greatest literary injustice ever committed. Besides we should greatly err if the modern clamours were to persuade us that the subtle disputations of the middle ages were really thus useless or frivolous. No greater error than such an opinion.

Without touching upon the ground of their curious investigations into the nature and property and combination of numbers, and their application to physics and psychology, in which they at least evinced a familiarity with some of the most remarkable opinions of the ancient sages;‡ and

* In *Lib. de Dono Perseverant.* 10.

† *Aristot. Metaph.* v. 6. xii. 6. 8. *Phys.* iii. 4. Brucker, *Convenientia numerorum Pythag.* cum ideis Platonis in *S. Mis. Hist. Phil.*

* *Quos ambos urina felis corripit.—De libris propriis.* † *Purg.* XV. ‡ *XV.*

in which they did but follow in the steps of Jerome, Augustin, Origen, Ambrose, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Basil, Hilary, Raban, and Bede,* we need only cite for instance, the dispute between the nominalists and realists, which has already served us to divide the different periods of the scholastic philosophy. Now this was one of the most important that could occupy the human mind. This contest may be traced to the early days of philosophy. According to Plato, ideas pre-existed in the divine intelligence, and are so many archetypes of existing essences; the world of ideas is the true and proper world, the real existence of τὸ ὄντως ὄν. Ideas then, in this sense, are not logical abstractions, but the original living essences, which, in themselves, are unity, though in various and harmonious modes developed. In these ideas which are the divine archetypes of things in the divine intelligence, is the true reality; and Plato knows of nothing else real, but them. Thus is the true ideal, the true real; the *Idea* is the *ὄν*, and the *ὄν* the *νοητὸν*, both are one. The Stoics with Zeno, on the contrary, held that nothing can be in the mind which was not before in the senses, and that mode and species exist not in the nature of things, but are only a creation of thought. From this view of the validity or invalidity of general ideas, arose the contest in the middle ages, between the realists and the nominalists, the former being those who held with Plato, which included the scholastics of greatest renown, and who, as many edicts declare, could always be followed with the greatest security; the latter, who ascribed only a logical existence to general ideas, those who agreed with Zeno and the Stoics; the former were said to hold *universalia ante rem*, the latter, *universalia post rem*.

Realism, especially as explained by St. Thomas of Aquin and Duns Scot, had in general decidedly the advantage until the end of the middle ages, when nominalism, through Occam, and especially in Germany, made a stand, though then it was no longer the excessive nominalism which Roscelin had first revived; but Occam's nominalism, which was nearly the same as that of Abailard, which, in the beginning, perhaps, would not have been considered nominalism, but the Platonic realism. It was in fact the middle party between them, though realism also, in Occam's time, was

no longer what it was in the time of Anselm. The extreme nominalism has been the parent of Locke's notions; in the middle ages, those who held it were called "conceptualists." There was during that period a third party, which sought to keep peace by holding the doctrine of Aristotle, that universals had a physical existence, and rested in the individual as the form. Thus the three opinions were—with Plato, that universals existed before the object—with Zeno, after the object—and with Aristotle, in the object. The followers of the latter, which was the nominalism of Roscelin, held that universals had no existence excepting in language, and that they were mere names, against which notion Abailard rose, maintaining that general ideas were united with individual perceptions, from which the human reason formed them. Thus, virtually, he gave them a more logical, though he stoutly held that they had an absolute and independent reality; he therefore styled himself an Aristotelian, though in other senses he was more a Platonist. Among the realists, Gilbert de la Porée, and Richard of St. Victor, held wholly with Plato, while Alanus de Insulis, Alexander de Hales, and Vincent of Beauvais, adopted the opinion of Aristotle.*

We should observe, in conclusion, that the contemptuous language respecting the disputants of both sides, in this celebrated controversy, which has been used by some excellent writers, of whom the Père Berthier may be cited as an instance,† can only apply with justice to those who revived it at the close of the fifteenth century, when after many troubles an edict of the king of France was directed against the nominalists, excluding them from the university of Paris, and from all the schools of the kingdom. It would not be fair, however, to quit this charge of over subtlety, dissections, and divisions, against the scholastic philosophy, without taking a glance at the subtleties of its adversaries, in modern times, which have been substituted in their stead. Every physical compound, according to the universal opinion of men, is truly and really one in substance; but the modern philosophers affirm, that a physical compound has no real unity, and that the substance of a body is only a word, and an abstract idea. It is very difficult for us to believe, they admit, indeed, that when we speak of a

* Corn. Agrip. Phil. occult. xi. 3.

* Staudenmaier.

† Hist. de l'Eglise Gall. tom. xvii. p. 120.

rock or a mountain, or a single leaf, or blade of grass as one, we speak of a plurality of independent substances, which have no other unity than in our conception. But so it is, say they, they are one not in nature but in our thought. Why are we to notice such distinctions? Because, as Ventura remarks, it would be hard to calculate all the evil consequences which have followed from their propagation among the people; for all wisdom, order, and truth are contained in the contrary proposition, "*quod duobus vel pluribus principis substantialiter coalescit, est realiter unum.*" For now let us mark the difference: in the first place the scholastics held a real and substantial unity between the human understanding and the known natural truth, which was like the form to matter; for St. Thomas says, "the human mind derives knowledge as matter form; and as matter before it has acquired form does not constitute a determined body, so the understanding, as in infants, before it has received truth, does not constitute reason; and as body consists in the substantial conjunction of matter and form, so reason in the substantial conjunction of truth and intellect; for body is matter endued with form, and reason is intellect enlightened by truth." From this theory of human reason important consequences are to be drawn. If intellect after it has known truth, as matter after it has received form, becomes active, therefore, before it has received truth, the intellect can act nothing, discern nothing. Matter does not create form to itself, nor intellect truth, but both receive them; therefore, the ancients held that to investigate or inquire by reason, it was not sufficient to possess intellect in potentia, as in infants, before truth has been received; but it could only be done by intellect in actu suo, by intellect conjoined to truth. The moderns, who mix all things together, and use words not in a philosophic manner, but with an oratorical or poetic licence, have taken reason for intellect, destitute of all truth, and then attributed all things to it, which the scholastics ascribed not to intellect in potentia, but to intellect enlightened by truth. St. Thomas says, "as the first man was to be a convenient principle of generation of the whole human race, as to body, so also was he to be a convenient principle of instruction as to mind;" which opinion concerning the origin of ideas being universally received, dispensed men from investigations respecting it. So, as from the intel-

lect and truth united proceeded reason, from the intelligent soul and body was man constituted; therefore, again, the scholastics inquired but little as to the relation of soul and body: the condition of operation as they say followed that of essence; for since man is a substantial compound of the intelligent soul and body, all his operations are compounded of soul and body; in like manner in the physical order the scholastics understood body to be really and substantially one, though compounded of two principles, matter and form. Ventura proceeds to show how the modern principle of separation has invaded all orders and branches of science. For first in domestic society, the parents were no more two individuals, but as it were one, and therefore, the scholastics never inquired to what point they were bound to remain together, or when they could be separated, for God had made them indissolubly one. The same theory held in public jurisprudence: public society was the substantial and permanent union of the prince and chiefs for the purpose of securing a happy and peaceable state. The same order prevailed in the religious society in which there was a substantial union between the Church and the state, to the increase of nations and the promotion of their liberty, civilization, and security; from which conjunction proceeded the republic of Christian nations. Therefore, it was not necessary to investigate the relations of Church and state, as if they had been separate and extraneous powers, which could be opposed to each other in their interests. The Church itself, or the Christian society, was a substantial and permanent union between the Holy See and the bishops, to the increase of the number of the faithful and the maintenance of faith and integrity of morals, so that when this idea of the unity of the Church possessed all minds, there was no attention paid to moderating the relations between the Holy See and the bishops. Since the pontiff, with the ecclesiastical ministry, are not separable, but are one, and the bishops separated from the pontiff are but as branches from the tree which bear no fruit, therefore, the public action of the Church was in like manner compound. Lastly, the theory of scientific order resembled that of the social, for as the latter was the substantial conjunction of Church and state, so the scientific order was the substantial conjunction of theology and philosophy, form-

ing the wisdom of Christian nations; therefore, the scholastics were at no pains to settle the relations between sacred and profane discipline, for both were indissolubly united in one, and the progress of the scientific order was compounded of both.

From all this, he concludes, how foolishly the moderns ridicule the scholastic wisdom, as if it had been a system of words, since it was concerned with things, and under the guidance of nature and religion, employed to explain all phenomena, powers, rights, offices, laws, and principles, by the rule of unity. This magnificent and most spacious edifice of the ancient wisdom, raised by the labours and studies of the most excellent minds of every Christian age, was overthrown by rash hands, and with it all real and substantial unity. As what was one had become two independent supposits, not substantially but only logically conjoined, the question immediately arose to which of the compounds preference was due. Hence began the inquiries, whether the intellect is in truth, or truth in the intellect,—the soul in the body, or the body in the soul,—the chief power of the Church in the pope, or in the bishops,—the state in the Church, or the Church in the state,—and other similar investigations, of which the ancient wisdom knew nothing. The second consequence was the belief that a division between these compounds was possible, and might be legitimate. So now men began to separate things, which God, the author of nature and grace, had joined together by an indissoluble bond; for instance, the intellect from natural truth—the intellect from revealed truth—the bishops from the pope—the people from the king—the wife

from the husband—and the state from the Church.

Wearied by the attempt to establish relations, the moderns proceeded to ascribe all things to one or other of these principles which they had thus separated; some taught that all belonged to form, others all to matter—some ascribed all to Revelation, without the concurrence of the intellect—others, all to the intellect without the aid of Revelation—some, all to the prince—others, all to the people; in short, the result was, to separate what God had joined together; they abrogated the unity between the human and divine nature in Christ—between the pope and the bishops—between the king and the people—between the husband and wife—between the state and the Church—between philosophy and theology; for, as in buildings of stone, all things in the moral order are so connected and compacted, that the foundation being removed, the whole edifice of wisdom and order and discipline is dissolved; so that they err who think that it was only the order established by Christ in the Church, which was disturbed by the modern subtleties; for it was a wide divorce or separation of all compounds, whether intellectual or philosophical, social or scientific, which parts being disjoined were then easily destroyed in gradual succession. But we must not remain on this ground any longer. Let us proceed to show how the two propositions lately announced, respecting the limits and encouragement given to the spirit of inquiry, which might seem at first to contradict each other, can be reconciled, which will lead us to explain what was the method of philosophy pursued in ages of faith.



CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHY, according to the ancient wisdom, was threefold, as relating to God, to man, and to matter, and, in consequence, there were three modes of argument, from faith, from testimony or reason, and from experiment. I know, indeed, that Lord Bacon notes as deficient that part of judgment, which is the application of the differing kinds of proofs to the differing kinds of subjects, and that his name is on the tongues of men at present, as having reformed philosophy, by first placing it on the basis of experiment; but neither am I ignorant that there is much confusion and error in the ideas of men respecting the state of philosophy in general before his time, as also concerning the good which he really effected; for that he was the first to show the necessity of experiment within the sphere where such proof is required, is an opinion which no one familiar with the writings of the middle ages can for a moment entertain.

It is not that the attempt by some, as a great modern philosopher says, to lessen the merit of his achievement, by showing that the inductive method had been practised in many instances, both ancient and modern, by the mere instinct of mankind, can be justly compared to the reasoning of those, who would refuse to Jenner his civic crown, because a few farmers in a remote province had, time out of mind, been acquainted with vaccination. Those who deny him the glory of having introduced inductive reasoning, as a new and hitherto unimagined process, do so not on the ground that a few obscure practitioners in a remote province had used it before his time; but that the most eminent men had possessed a clear perception, and had made a broad announcement of its paramount importance as the Alpha and Omega of science, though they may have wanted the occasion for exemplifying it in their own writings, from having pursued a different order of philosophy, where it would have been inapplicable. Are Roger

Bacon, Richard of St. Victor, St. Anselm, and St. Thomas, men whose sentences can be compared to the empirical maxims of an obscure individual in a remote province? Yet all these great philosophers proclaimed it.

Roger Bacon, alluding to physical science, says, "*sine experientia nihil sufficienter sciri potest.*"* I am aware, indeed, that his works are pronounced by a modern distinguished author, to be not only so far beyond his age in the knowledge which they contain, but so different from the temper of the times in his assertion, of the supremacy of experiment, that he finds it difficult to conceive how such a character could then exist.† Heeren finds it difficult to conceive how John of Salisbury could have then existed;‡ but the truth is that the more these philosophers study the middle ages, the oftener will they have to encounter such difficulties. With respect to Roger Bacon's assertion of the supremacy of experiment, the difficulty of conceiving his existence then will certainly not prove very great. As well might they wonder how Richard of St. Victor, St. Anselm, Duns Scot, and numberless others, could have then existed: for hear what these teachers lay down: "Some things," says Richard, "we prove by experiment, others we collect by reasoning, and the certainty of others we hold by believing: the first relate to temporal knowledge, the two latter to divine."§ "Science is acquired by experiment," says St. Anselm, or one of his disciples, "when a person has certain knowledge of any thing which he has proved. It is also acquired by reason when any one by natural discretion of mind is confirmed in those things, which are to be done or omitted; it is also acquired by reading: but since it inflates, unless charity should edify it, there will be no advantage from it without the will of goodness."||

* Opus Majus, vi. c. 1.

† Whewell, Hist. of Induct. Science, i. 341.

‡ Gesch. d. Class. Lit. i. 250.

§ Ric. S. Vict. de Trinitate, Lib. i. c. 1.

|| S. Anselmi de Similitudinibus, cap. clviii.

"Science strictly taken, includes" says Duns Scotus, "four things, namely, that it be certain knowledge without deception and doubt, concerning a thing known necessarily, produced by an evident cause, and applied to the intelligence for being known, by syllogistic argument; in regard to which last condition alone, theology is not a science."* Here, indeed, the other order of proofs for other orders of truth is insisted upon, but after such passages, which might easily be multiplied, how can any one justly affirm that it was the universal opinion in the middle ages, established with the authority of a religious creed, that all science might be obtained by the use of reasoning alone; and that logic included the whole of science? If we refer for illustrations to the actual practice of the period, we find but scanty materials, undoubtedly, for the reason that the studies of the most eminent men were not directed to physical science; but it is by no means true, that they are undiscoverable. St. Thomas supports his arguments respecting material things, upon observation and experiment, his maxim being "*ubi auctoritas deficit, sequi debemus naturæ conditionem.*"† "In all assertions," saith he, "we ought to follow the nature of things, excepting in regard to those things which are delivered by divine authority, which are above nature."‡ It is to Lord Bacon, we are told, that we owe the broad announcement of that grand and fertile principle, that the whole of natural philosophy consists entirely of a series of inductive generalizations, commencing with particulars, and carried up to universal laws. But what then becomes of our chronology, when we find the Angel of the School laying down this proposition that "in acquiring science we must not begin with principles and elements, because, from observing sensible effects, we arrive at the knowledge of principles and of causes."§ An instance will best show his manner of applying the rule. "Some say," he observes, "that animals, which are now ferocious and disposed to kill other animals, in the pristine state, before the fall, were gentle, not only towards man, but also towards each other; but this is altogether irrational, for the nature of animals is not changed by the sin of man, and it is evident from the formation of their bodies, that it

is natural to them to feed on flesh."* Similar examples might be produced from Duns Scotus; thus, he argues, that man would have died in paradise, from the permission given to eat of every tree, because a body which needeth aliment must be corruptible.† St. Thomas protests against the practice of confounding the different kinds of proofs in these words—"I declare, from the beginning of this work, that among the articles which it contains, there are some which do not regard the doctrine of faith, but rather the opinions of philosophy; for it is a thing truly injurious to affirm or deny, that a certain opinion is essential to the Christian doctrine, when it does not even relate to it. St. Augustin says, when I hear a Christian who is ignorant of these systems, which the philosophers have imagined respecting the sky and the stars, the revolutions of the sun and moon, and who adopts a different opinion, I hear him with patience, as a man who expresses his opinion. Elsewhere the same Augustin speaks thus:—A Christian should beware how he speaks on questions of natural philosophy, as if they were of holy Scripture; for an infidel who should hear him deliver absurdities, could not avoid laughing. Thus the Christian would be confused, and the infidel but little edified, for the infidel would conclude that our authors had really these extravagant opinions, and therefore, they will despise them to their own eternal ruin. Therefore, the opinions of philosophers should never be proposed as dogmas of faith, or rejected as contrary to faith, when it is not certain that they are so."‡ words cited for approval in every encyclopedical work of the middle ages.

Now, after this, I would ask, is it just to affirm that during that period, religious authority was assigned to physical science, by making all supposed truth part of religion—that error in regard to it became wicked, dissent heresy, and that men felt bound to subscribe to all views of natural science propounded by the school? The illustrious author of the history of the inductive sciences, while admitting, that the Copernican system was received in Poland and Germany from the first, without bigotted opposition, proceeds to affirm that in Italy the Church entertained the persuasion that her authority could not be

* Duns Scot. in Lib. Sent. Prolog. q. iii. 4.

† Sum. P. 1. q. cl. art. 1.

‡ Id. q. xcix. art. 1. § Id. q. lxxxv. art. 8.

* P. 1. q. xcvi. art. 1.

† Lib. ii. Sent. D. xix. q. 1.

‡ Lib. 1. De Genesi.

upheld at all, without maintaining it to be supreme on all points. I am at a loss to conceive his grounds for such an induction. What papal bull, what council, what synod had ever determined questions of pure science? When had the shadow of the papal chair, from which he recoils with such alarm, been ever cast over the speculations of philosophers, as long as they confined them to the inductive sciences?

Copernicus, who was himself an ecclesiastic, so little feared it, that he dedicated the book, containing his discoveries, which he published at the entreaty of Cardinal Schomberg to Pope Paul the Third. The fact is, that the phrases "assuming supreme authority, in all matters of opinion, and the extravagant assumptions of the Church of Rome, which it was impossible sincerely to allow, and necessary to evade by artifice," signify nothing that ever existed, excepting in the brain of prejudiced adversaries, who, with a view to leading greatest men like him astray, misrepresented what they chose to resist. The Church may have found it necessary to check scientific men, when they chose to dogmatise and alarm the people by affirming that their physical discoveries could not be questioned without impugning the Scriptures. When Galileo maintained and wanted Rome to declare, that the Copernican system was founded on Scripture, the question was referred to a congregation, which could not but decide, as it did, in the negative. Another congregation, it is to be lamented, declared the new system to be directly opposed to Scripture, and therefore heretical; but philosophers were allowed to expound it as an hypothesis, to which decision the Minim editors of Newton's *Principia*, whom the Protestants will persist in calling Jesuits, allude in the terms of their preface, which are so often cited. But, it is to be observed, that these decrees were not dogmatical decisions of the Church, nor of the Holy See, and that, however we may lament the want of caution in the congregations, their proceedings only emanated from their veneration for the written word of God.*

If it had been in the nature of things for the Church to pronounce upon mere physical tenets as such, Copernicus, in a work dedicated to the pope, would not have alluded to a possible opposition from vain babblers, who, knowing nothing of mathematics, may yet assume the right of judging,

on account of some place of Scripture per-versely wrested to their purpose. He would have hardly said, "that he heeded them not, and looked upon their judgments as rash and contemptible." That the inductive sciences were not the study of the greatest minds is evident; that they had made no progress, or not even a beginning, one may be willing to grant; but still, in the face of such formal announcement of principles, can it be said, without injustice, that "the only kind of philosophy then studied was one, in which no sound physical science could have place." And that "the whole course of men's employments tended to make them not only ignorant of physical truth, but incapable of conceiving its nature?"

Tennemann, observing that Lord Bacon was contemporary with Campanella, remarks, that it was not from those countries which pretend to the glory of producing exclusively vigorous independent habits of thought, but from Italy that the general impulse came, which then directed so many philosophers to the study of the natural sciences, on the established principle that experiment was their only basis. Bernardinus Telesius, who thence became so eminent, was born at Cosenza, in 1508, imbued with classical learning at Rome and Milan, and with philosophy and mathematics at Padua. He wrote *De Natura Rerum juxta propria Principia*, and founded at Naples the *Academia Consentina*, to promote experimental science,—becoming an object of displeasure and suspicion, in consequence not of his placing natural philosophy on that basis, but of his wild theories respecting the souls of plants and beasts. In truth, nothing can be more vain than the pretensions that the rejection of authority within the sphere of religion contributed to the recognition of the necessity of employing, within the sphere of physical science, experiment and demonstration. While Catholic philosophers and the religious orders, in a body, were exulting in having thrown off the yoke of the Stagyrte, declaring that they cared more for one truth than for the whole peripatetic philosophy,* while they were pursuing the method indicated by Richard of St. Victor and St. Thomas, and even expressly exposing the necessity for observing it in the study of natural science, the followers of Luther and Calvin were for a long time the stoutest champions of the authority of Aristotle.

* Bergier, *Dict. Theol. Art. Science*. Riccioli *Almagestum Novum*, tom. i. p. ii. p. 496.

* *Bibliotheca Script. S. Ord. Cisterciensis*, 186.

It is clear then that there was no irreconcilable variance between the spirit of the philosophy taught in the middle ages and the principles of inductive science; and so far, therefore, all would be agreed: but the sequel will disclose a difference that I fear cannot be so easily adjusted. There being two classes of truth recognised in Catholic schools, of which one is the object of science, and the other that of faith, there were necessarily two principles of certainty, one for the truths of faith, and the other for those of science; according to the sentence of St. Augustin, "*quod intelligimus debemus rationi, quod credimus auctoritati.*" What we understand we owe to reason, including all its modes of application, which is one principle of certainty; what we believe, to authority, which is the other. The claims of authority and of reason to assent were not therefore regarded as antagonist principles, according to the view taken of them by the illustrious historian of the inductive sciences; but as resting on one and the same principle, rooted in the intellectual constitution of man, and essential in its duality to the safe and vigorous action of his mind. Though the question of certainty has been chiefly agitated in ages of doubt, the philosophers of the ages of faith did not fear to meet it; Henry of Ghent treats on it and inquires whether man can know any thing with certainty, and whether every man can know certainly what he knows.* St. Augustin sets out from the knowledge of his own existence: "here," he says, "I fear no argument of the Academicians, saying, what, if you are deceived? Unquestionably, in knowing that I exist, I am not deceived."†

"If any one should say that knowledge might be demonstrated by reason, let him be told," says Clemens Alexandrinus, "that the first principles are not capable of being demonstrated, for they are known not by any art or prudence. From faith then alone do men derive the beginning of all things."‡ The first truth cannot be taught, for it is impossible to teach a person any truth unless you set out from a truth which he knows already. Reason, that divine principle, contains the principles of all the speculative or practical knowledge that we can acquire.§ "*Primum intelligibile intellectione creari, impossibile,*"|| says Duns

Scotus. To attempt to proceed farther than the *sensus intimus*, belongs only to a vain-glorious ostentation, in constituting the origin of certainty, which was unknown in ages of faith. "There is no intelligence so averse," says Duns Scotus, "but that it can understand some truth, because the first principles are known to every intelligence from their terms."* "By accident," says St. Thomas, "the intelligence can be deceived in regard to compound things; but in simple things, of which there is no composition in the definitions, we cannot be deceived. Falsehood is in the mind in consequence of composition and division, but in the absolute consideration of the quiddity of any thing which can be known by itself, the intelligence is never deceived."†

It is important to remark the judgment of the middle ages respecting the value of human reason, in order that we may appreciate the wisdom of the clean of heart in steering clear of the opposite errors into which men of genius, in later times, have so often fallen. "It is not by any of my senses," says Augustin, "that I have known the things which are signified by the words of the question, if a thing be? or what is it? Nor have I seen them any where, excepting in my mind. Let me hear, then, how came they there? for in vain do I inquire of all my senses, to discover by what gate they entered. If they were coloured, or had a sound, or a smell, or a taste, or could be touched, it would be easy to ascertain this point. I did not learn them on the testimony of any one, but in my own mind I discovered that they were true. There I laid them up as in a treasury, from which I could at any time draw them for my use, enabling me to answer directly, 'that is true,' or, 'it is so,' according to the proposition."‡

How far the philosophers of the middle ages were from exaggerating the dignity of ratiocination, may be gathered from the words of St. Thomas, "that the certainty of reason comes from the intelligence, but the necessity for reason from the imperfection of the intelligence;"§—an observation which is otherwise expressed by a modern philosopher, who says, "To God all truth is as by intuition; by us truth is only apprehended through the slow and toilsome process of comparison. In some of our capacities we may perhaps exhibit a faint

* Henric. Gand. tom. i. art. i. q. 11. f. 8.

† De Civ. Dei, Lib. xi. 26.

‡ Stromat. Lib. ii. c. 4.

§ Rozevin sur la Certitude, chap. vii.

|| Theorema, ii.

* Lib. II. Sent. d. vii. q. 1.

† 1. P. q. 85. art. 7. ‡ Confess.

§ 2. 2. q. 49. art. 5 ad 2.

shadow of a portion of our Maker's image; but in the reasoning power, of which we sometimes vainly boast, we bear to him, I believe, no resemblance whatever.* Bayle himself acknowledges that "there is no one who, in making use of his reason, does not stand in need of God's assistance; without which," he continues, "it is a deceitful guide; for it may be compared to one of those corrosive powders which, after consuming the dead flesh of a wound, would continue to eat into the living, would excavate the bones, and pierce even to the marrow. At first it refutes errors; but, if it be not stopped there, it attacks truths; and when it has liberty, it goes so far that it no longer knows where it is, nor can it find any rest." "Reason," says St. Thomas, "sometimes accepts as true that which is an obstacle to the knowledge of truth."†

On the other hand, the opposite error was avoided with equal sagacity. "It is manifest," says St. Thomas, "that, according to the divine law, man is to observe the order of reason in all things which can come under its use."‡ "The light of reason," he says elsewhere, "by which we know principles, has been placed in us by God, as a kind of image of uncreated truth which is reflected in us. Thus all human doctrine must draw its efficacy from the virtue of this light. 'Dicitur intelligere quasi intus legere, to consult the interior light of reason.' Manifestly it is God alone who teaches inwardly; to whose operations St. Augustin alludes, saying, 'Noli foras ire; in te ipsum redi; in interiore homine habitat veritas.'"<§

"Not reason, but false reason, is to be guarded against and detested," says Henry of Ghent; "for if their reason," he continues, "had been true, the heretics would not have erred through it; and as we ought not to avoid all words because there is such a thing as falsehood, so we ought not to neglect reason because there is a false reason."<||

St. Augustin, in writing against the Academicians, appeals constantly to the light of individual reason, as having in itself that which cannot be doubted.¶ "To accept true things for false," saith he, "that he should err unwillingly, is not the nature of man, as formed, but it is the penalty of man condemned."** With this judgment

St. Thomas agrees, saying, "In the state of innocence not only there could not be error, but there could not be even the least false opinion."* Therefore, the influence of purity of heart upon the intelligence, which restores man to that state in some measure, can explain many points of contrast in the philosophic history of ages of faith, and of later times. St. Thomas held that it could be shown by natural reason that human souls were incorruptible. Duns Scotus, indeed, maintained the contrary; but, as Melchior Canus observes, alluding only to mathematical demonstration. However, he seems to hold that no certain truth can be known naturally by the intelligence of man, wayfaring, without a special illustration of uncreated light.† This opinion, joined with his maxim that necessary knowledge was never wanting to the human race,‡ can nevertheless afford but little support to the doctrine maintained in the seventeenth century by Pelisson,§ that the grounds of certainty lay in the universal and not in the individual reason of men;—an opinion which some eloquent writers have revived in later times, both in France and Italy; but this controversy, which we have lived to see set at rest, did not agitate the middle ages. There is nothing, as Rozevin observes, in the holy Scripture, or in the decisions of the Church, or in the holy fathers, or in any theologian, to oblige us to recognise the infallible authority of the human race. Universal reason is an abstraction, and it is absurd to ascribe infallibility to an abstraction. St. Thomas says that "it is impossible that the intelligence of all men should be one."|| He commences his sum of theology by demonstrating the existence of God and the divine perfections; and in his four books against the Gentiles, he proves, by way of demonstration, the truth of the Catholic religion; and nowhere does he allege the authority of the human race or of universal reason. He does not, indeed, say that men should acquire the certainty of these truths by way of demonstration, but only that they may so acquire it. He says that the existence of God is an article of faith only to him who has not the demonstration of it. The existence of God and other things similar, which one can know by natural reason, as is said in the

* Sedgwick on the Studies of the Universit.
13. † Qu. vi. art. 1.

‡ Cont. Gentes, iii. 128.

§ De Ver. Relig.

¶ Hen. Gand. l. art. x. q. 111. ¶ Id. 73.

** Id. de Lib. Arb. i. 3. c. 18.

* II. d. 23. q. 18. art. 6.

† Duns Scot. in Lib. Sent. Lib. i. dist. iii. q. 4.

‡ Id. Prolog. q. 11.

§ Réflexions sur les Différends de la Religion, sect. xii.

¶ P. i. q. 76. art. 2.

Epistle to the Romans, are not articles of faith, but preliminaries to these articles; for faith presupposes natural knowledge, as grace presupposes nature: but nothing prevents what is itself susceptible of being demonstrated from being admitted as credible by one who does not possess the demonstration of it.*

We come now, therefore, to consider the other principle of certainty recognised in the ages involved in this history, namely, faith. Our reason sees with certainty that it ought to believe in the divine authority manifested by miracles. "We who are of the faithful," says Richard of St. Victor, "hold nothing to be more certain than that which we apprehend by faith; for it has been divinely revealed to our fathers, and confirmed by so many great and admirable prodigies, that it seems a kind of madness in those who entertain any doubt whatever."† And again, "Truly to a faithful soul nothing ought to be more authentic than that which sounds on the lips of all confirmed by Catholic authority."‡ "The divine clemency," saith St. Thomas, "hath provided that even those things which reason can demonstrate should be held by faith; for if one could arrive at the knowledge of God only by way of reason, the human race would remain in the darkness of a profound ignorance; because this knowledge, which is the principal mean of rendering man good and perfect, would arrive only to a very few, and after a long space of time.§ There would follow," he says, "three inconveniences from holding that this kind of truth should be left to the discovery of reason: the first, that few men have the disposition and power of arriving by their reason at this highest degree; some being hindered by natural inability, some by occupations, and some by indolence: the second inconvenience is, that such a knowledge can only be acquired in this way after a long time, on account of the truth itself being so profound, and because in the season of youth the mind is not apt to acquire such knowledge; so that the human race would continue in the greatest darkness if it were only to acquire truth by means of reason—a way only possible to a few, and to them after a long time: the third inconvenience would be, that in all investigations of human reason much falsehood is mixed, arising from the weakness of our intellect and the crowd of phantoms: and therefore, those

things would be left in doubt with many, which are capable of being truly demonstrated. So that it is necessary that truth concerning divine things should be exhibited to men, by the way of faith, with fixed certainty."

A late philosopher, though unconnected visibly with the Catholic school, speaks to the same effect, observing that "man, as a reasoning animal, must always have doubted of his immortality and plan of conduct; but that with faith there is immediate submission to a divine will, which we are sure is good."*

This important truth did not escape the penetrating mind of the ancient fathers; and we find Consentius alluding to it in his letter to St. Augustin: "If the faith of the holy church," he says, "were to be acquired by the way of disputation, and not by the piety of believing, no one besides the philosophers and orators could possess beatitude; but since it hath pleased God, who chooseth the weak things of the world to confound the strong, to save by the folly of preaching those who believe, not so much is reason to be required as is the authority of the saints to be followed."† An argument drawn from the same observation is used by Pelisson, in reasoning with the supporters of the pretended reform. "Having rejected the authority of the Catholic Church, each individual amongst them," he remarks, "must examine not only the controversies of their time, but also all those which have ever been. Since this church has been so long deceived, they must begin to examine seriously whether they ought to be Arians, or Macedonians, or Nestorians, or Eutychians. These errors were embraced by very great men, full of genius and learning, and who had no wish to lose themselves. All heresies must be examined, for who knows which may not be right? There were eighty in the time of St. Epiphanius; St. Augustin reckoned ninety. You cannot condemn them without a hearing. Therefore, you must examine them all, one after the other; and to this study are bound alike the learned and the ignorant, by an equally indispensable obligation."‡

"Certainty," says St. Thomas, "belongs both to science and faith; but there is this difference in the manner of their acquisition, that the certainty of faith is obtained by a divine light infused by God, and that the certainty of science is acquired by natural

* I. q. 2. art. 2. ad 1.

† Rich. S. Vict. de Trinitate, p. i. Lib. i. c. 2.

‡ Id. i. iv. 20. § Cont. Gentes, Lib. i. c. 4.

* Sir H. Davy, Dialog. ii. 101. † Epist. cx.

‡ Réflexions sur les Différends de la Religion, viii.

reason. However, as Rozevin observes, "Reason, whether individual or general, can never give us any thing but a human and natural certainty. One may have an entire and complete certainty of revelation, and believe in it, without having divine faith—that which is a gift of God, and which has all its certainty from God. Many enemies of religion have confessed, on their death-beds, that they never doubted of the truth which they had combated. They had not divine faith; and if they had received it in their infancy, their rebellious reason had rejected it, through the perversity of their will. They had lost faith, without having lost certainty; like the demons, who have a complete certainty of the mysteries of faith, but no faith."*

Faith is a divine virtue infused, so that one act contrary suffices to destroy it; therefore, it is impossible to deny one article of faith, and continue to have a divine faith in any other. "Man," saith St. Thomas, "has received two sorts of good in his interior: the one appertains to human nature, and thus the natural law is engraven in him. This is his natural state. The other is added to the first by the gift of grace, and thus the new law is engraven in man, not only indicating to him what he ought to do, but also assisting him to do it;"† and this is his supernatural state.

The philosophers of the middle ages remark, that even in the former he cannot dispense with faith. "Human faith," says Melchior Canus, "is the way ordained by God, by which man is first brought to the use of reason, and the whole order and duration of human life depends upon it; so that they who would take away human faith from the minds of men are not only senseless, but, after the manner of the giants, they make war against the gods; that is, they contend with nature."‡ But to the latter state faith is the first and only way of access. "It was necessary," says Richard of St. Victor, "that nature, which fell by believing, should rise again by believing; it fell by believing the serpent—it rises again by believing in the Redeemer, that what it lost by faith it may recover by faith."§ "He who wishes to believe nothing," says St. Anselm, "unless with reason and understanding preceding, confounds the thing,

and, wishing to know all things, believing nothing, annihilates the faith which is in him. But whoever approaches God must believe that he is, saith the Scripture; and the just liveth by faith."* Christ says, "He who believeth not is condemned." "This certainly is evident," adds the author of *Theologia Germanica*; "for man, who comes into this life, has no knowledge, nor can he come to knowledge, unless he first believes; and he who wishes to know before he believes, never comes to true knowledge."† Here the schoolmen observed, that the vision of God by faith in general is the exclusive privilege of men whose hearts are clean; since the acquisition or retention of faith presupposed a good will. St. Thomas shows that there "concurs to faith an intellectual habit, by which man is disposed to obey a will tending to divine truth; for the understanding assents to the truth of faith, not as if convinced by reason, but as if commanded by the will. 'Nullus enim credit nisi volens,' as Augustin saith."‡ Duns Scotus also shows that there must be a certain habit infused into the will, in order that there should be faith in the intelligence; "for the intelligence," he says, "is not moved unless by two things co-operating—the object and the will; and the credible is not so efficacious that it should move the intelligence itself to assent; so that, to the end that the intelligence should assent, it is necessary that it should be moved by the will; but it cannot be moved by the will to assent to any thing supernatural, unless in the will there should be a certain habit supernaturally inclining to that volition. As, therefore, a supernatural habit of assent is requisite in the intelligence; so also is it necessary in the will that it should wish to assent."§ "Therefore," concludes Henry of Ghent, "the beginning of faith requires an especial illumination, which, however, is offered to all men by God."||

The principle of divine faith was neither in the general nor in the individual reason; for that would be giving a human foundation to a divine faith. It is an infused virtue, received in baptism. Was it asked how? Such an inquirer would have been told, in reply, that he must first explain how children come to discern between the noun and the verb, the substantive and the adjective, which neither they nor we can tell, so profound and hidden is the process. In the same

* Chap. ix.

† I. 2. q. 106. art. 1 ad 2.

‡ Melch. Can. de *Loci Theologicis*, Lib. xi. cap. 4.

§ Ric. S. Vict. de *Incarnatione Verbi*, Lib. i. c. 9.

* S. Anselmi de *Sacram.* Alt. p. ii. cap. 2.

† Cap. xlvii. ‡ Q. cxi. art. 1.

§ Duns Scot. Lib. iii. sent. dist. xxv. q. 2.

|| Hen. Gand. tom. i. art. 1. q. 11. f. 8.

manner, according to the remark of Bossuet, do we learn the language of the Church. A secret light conducts us in the one state, as in the other; there it is reason—here, faith. Reason develops itself by degrees, and so does faith infused in baptism. There must be motives to attach us to the authority of the Church. God knows them, and we know them in general; but in what way he arranges them, and how he makes them perceptible to these innocent souls, is the secret of his Holy Spirit. But it is on this foundation that all is built. In course of time we know more distinctly why we believe. Scripture even will strengthen the bonds which attach us; but we must always come to the origin, that is, to believe on the authority of the Church. By that one commences and continues to believe in the Scripture; for St. Augustin was already consummate in ecclesiastical science when he said, that “he would not believe the Gospel if the authority of the Catholic Church did not oblige him.”

In proportion as reason is unfolded, men may examine the motives of faith, not before they believe, or in order to believe, but while believing, and consequently without holding their faith in suspense, in the same manner as they can examine the motives on which the love and obedience of their parents are founded. So then God, as the author of nature, assists the infant mind by the way of authority to come to the knowledge of language, of natural things, and of certain metaphysical truths; and in like manner, as the author of grace, he assists it under the influence of the Catholic rule, in which it is born and nourished, to acquire habitual faith, which begins from obedience to parents and instructors as the intermediate organs, and ends in the judgment of the reason consenting to truths as having been revealed by God, which is the formal motive of its faith. Consequently the Christian is never for a moment abandoned by the God of mercy to a state of doubt and incertitude, but is always secure and well grounded in his confidence, because the motives of his faith, always supremely reasonable, are presented to his reason in proportion as it is capable of discerning them; so that, appreciating them when arrived at maturity, every one is able to say with St. Basil, “Although, in other respects, our life furnishes matter for which we should mourn, yet for this one thing I am bold enough to glory in the Lord, that I never had false opinions respecting God, nor had to change my judgment from perceiving a former error; but

the doctrine which I received from childhood, respecting God and his blessed Mother, and then what I received from my grandmother Macrina, I have preserved in myself, increased with just additions; for as my reason grew mature, I did not take up one opinion after another, but what I once received from them I finished and brought to perfection.”*

We see, then, what was the office of reason in relation to faith: it was to confirm the lessons imparted to the innocent soul in baptism; it was, also, under the interior action of divine grace, to lead adult infidels to the faith in Jesus Christ, who are to be drawn by natural reason, by the law and the prophets, and the apostolic preaching; and further, it was to guard Christians themselves from heresy and schism; for, to cite but one instance, the authority of the church is to be proved against two sorts of adversaries: the one know not, or reject, revelation and the existence of a church divinely established; the other admit the existence of revelation, and of a church of Jesus Christ; but they dispute only on the nature and qualities of this divine church. Against the first, theologians prove the divinity of the Christian church by the prophecies, by miracles, by the holiness of its doctrine, by the multitude of martyrs, by the fact of the establishment of this church, and of its propagation; against the second, they prove the nature and qualities of the church by the marks contained in the symbol of Nice as being generally received by all Christians, and by the testimony of those very Scriptures whose authority is received by all.

This leads us at once to the solution of the question respecting the limits and encouragement given to the spirit of inquiry in ages of faith. The distinction between the philosophy of inquisition and that of demonstration will explain the difference in the language of the ancient fathers respecting philosophy. Degerando says that some of them received and others rejected philosophy. This is an accuracy; for all the fathers rejected the philosophy of inquisition, applied to religious and moral truth, and all embraced that of demonstration, which was to demonstrate, explain, and illustrate truth already known.

Melchior Canus, showing the importance of the study of philosophy in the ecclesiastical school, appeals to the example of its early doctors, Dydimus, Justin, Gregory,

* Epist. lxxix. ad Eustat. Sebast. Episcop.

with all his strength, did he labour to maintain a 'reformed scholastic philosophy': the current was too strong for his feeble arms to stem it. Philosophy and religion were to be reformed thoroughly at the same time, by declaring that in both the one thing essential was inquiry and experiment. The combat between nominalism and realism, which had been going on from the time of Occam with a preponderance of the former, prepared the way for a complete separation between theology and philosophy, which had been maintained in perfect coalition till the end of the fourteenth century, while realism reigned. The new division of the sciences, under an illustrious name, became general; and the ancient method in philosophy, so essentially wise and Christian, was abandoned to make way for the introduction of observation and experiment, as the fountains not alone of natural science, but of all knowledge.

"The successful results of our experiments and reasonings in natural philosophy," says an illustrious philosopher of our time, "and the incalculable advantages which experience, systematically consulted and dispassionately reasoned on, has conferred in matters purely physical, tend of necessity to impress something of the well-weighed and progressive character of science on the more complicated conduct of our social and moral relations. It is thus that legislation and politics"—and he might certainly have added, religion—"became gradually regarded as experimental sciences, and history as the archive of experiments successful and unsuccessful, accumulating towards the solution of the grand problem." I say he might have included religion in the list, for innovation in regard to it was pursued from the first, by men cherishing as a vital principle an unbounded spirit of inquiry and ardency of expectation. Accordingly the heathen style was once more revived. All books were now—"Inquisitiones philosophicæ;" or, "de invenienda veritate." The prayers offered in the new temples besought God to grant them in this world the knowledge of his truth, as if a new and special revelation were to be expected, and as if truth had not been made visible to him that runs. Hence began to prevail a language respecting the toleration of all opinions, which alarmed those who rested their own on a human authority, who complained that "scarcely any man out of the bosom of the Romish Church now dared to speak as if he were sure that he was right." The complaint, indeed, argued great inconsistency;

but the observation was just, for the general language, whatever one may choose to say of it, had unquestionably more resemblance to that of the heathen Academy than to the apostolic doctrine. "*Nos, qui sequemur probabilia, nec ultra quam id quod verisimile occurrerit, progredi possumus, et refellere sine pertinacia, et refelli sine iracundia parati sumus.*"* These words of Cicero are precisely similar to the language of the most eminent writers who now came forward as Christians. Amiable and admirable may be the sentiment expressed; but nothing, also, can place in a stronger light the fact that it owes its virtue to a change of circumstances, and that the modern philosophy rests upon a totally different foundation from that which was laid by the apostles. Meanwhile a separation was made between philosophy and religion, though to both the one method was applied. The new masters began by saying, "We have now no need of authority; no regard is to be shown to councils or the testimony of the fathers; but all things are to be examined and proved, and only what seems good to be held fast. Let us suppose, then, that as yet we know nothing, not even whether God exist or not, or what is the cause and end of things." "I remember," says an Italian philosopher, "when I first heard this language, as a pious youth, I was seized with astonishment, and I said, to myself, 'If these things are already known, what need of searching farther? Is reason to be preferred to faith?—the words of a professor to my catechism?'" It was easy to anticipate what would be the result of such discipline. Obedience to faith was confounded with a foolish credulity and a false philosophic method. Rustics, workmen, servants, poor people, and women, were all looked upon as an unenlightened race—*mutum et turpe pecus*—no one cared for their opinions; while the proud inquirers, who believed themselves the arbiters and judges of all truth, who had rejected all authority and all external testimonies as vulgar prejudices, had after all done nothing but revive the pantheism, materialism, and scepticism of the oriental and Greek philosophy; and indeed, it was not a dissimilarity of positions and of facts which prevented men from hearing a voice from the cities and academies which were styled the centres of this modern light, like that of the ancients in days of their confusion, exclaiming, "Who does not admire the wisdom of the people that we call barbarians? Never

* *Tuscul. ii. 2.*

did they call in question whether there was a Divine Power or not, or whether it did or did not take an interest in human affairs. No Indian, no Celt, no Egyptian, ever imagined a system like that of Evhemerus of Messena, or Diogenes of Phrygia, of Hippo, of Diagoras, of Sosias, and Epicurus." Some, on the one hand, alarmed at the prospect of interminable discussions and endless inquiry, and on the other opening their eyes to the fact that the great majority of mankind think not for themselves, tried to establish an authority in place of that which was overthrown. They seemed desirous of retaining the dignity of a name, when they had departed from the thing. Calvin himself mutilated his own book, and changed many parts of it when he began to govern. So, after renouncing all regard to what the fathers had decided in holy councils, these men adopted, instead of canons possessing a real authority where reason was heard, that which might be denominated a Greek invocation to call fools into a circle. They made themselves a fearful monument!—the wreck of old convictions, things transmitted from saintly ancestors, maimed rites disfigured and abused. But it was soon evident that confusion's cure lives not in these confusions. Their motive was plain enough: all they sought was a return to something like stability—like common sense. Hence Europe beheld some kings and queens who, as Malebranche remarked, had more power over the spiritual than over the temporal affairs of their subjects, though the advocates of this system at the present day seem to say that its head could not have exercised his functions unless he were despotic even in the latter; for these unhappy nations, caring less to preserve their faith than their earthly treasures, easily entered into the views of their princes, provided they were not contrary to their temporal interests." But, inconsistent as our nature is, such an authority was like sand to stem a torrent; the human intelligence could not be bound by it; and, in fact, as a modern writer observes, "it is more honourable to the head as well as to the heart to be misled by over eagerness in the pursuit of truth, than to be safe from blundering by contempt of it." In our days this mould, the work of King, Lords, and Commons, has given way on all sides, as its warmest well-wishers acknowledge; confessing with Knox, in his late work, that unbounded liberty has become, even with those who

are appointed to keep it in repair, a second nature. They say true; and many, therefore, seem to think that "vast confusion waits, as doth a raven on a sick-fallen beast, the imminent decay of wrested pomp." The real inquirers had, indeed from the first, gone on as in pagan times, verifying the remark of Cicero, that some proverbs of the people are more true than the dogmas of some philosophers;* and often justifying his indignant exclamation, "Hæc non turpe est, dubitare philosophos quæ ne rustici quidem dubitent?"†

As the Pythagoreans thought to set out from numbers, the Socratics from ignorance, the Platonists from innate ideas, the Aristotelians from experiment; so among the moderns, Leibnitz places the foundation in dogmas, Spinoza in absolute identity, Berkeley in interior reflection, Locke in sensation and reflection, Kant in criticism or pure reason, Fitscher in mysticism, Stewart in sincretism, Degerando in a certain new empiricism. As soon as one philosopher lays a foundation, another comes and undermines his structure. One requires that you prove experience to be valid, another that you prove evidence, another desires you to prove the possibility of any knowledge whatever. Every time that a philosopher believes he has placed a deeper base than his predecessors, there immediately comes a thinker who sinks deeper still, and places a new doubt on this base: so that, as Tertullian says, "Plus diversitatis invenies inter philosophos, quam societatis."‡ It is, therefore, again as at Athens, when, as St. Augustin says, "disciples of the same Socrates would dispute about the first principles of philosophy, all being divided, no two thinking alike, no not respecting lands, or houses, or money affairs, or the things which make men live miserably or well. Not in vain," he adds, "such a state was called the mystic Babylon, for the word Babylon means confusion,"§ a reading which should be pressed upon the attention of the next expositor of the Apocalypse, who shall interpret it as Rome—that source of order for the world.

What line of argument then did they take who wished to represent this mystic Babylon as the Church of Jesus Christ? Truly they revived an old error, and asserted that the unity of faith meant a unity

* De Finibus, ii. 31.

† De Officiis, iii. 19.

‡ De Civ. Dei, xviii. 41.

§ De Anima.

in the right of individual dissent. These, therefore, without evincing despair, maintained that it was unphilosophical to seek certainty excepting in the sciences, and ridiculed Duns Scotus for saying that "As the end of the journey is intended by him who walks, so the exclusion of doubt is the end intended by every one who speculates respecting truth :"^{*} others on the contrary revived the notion of the ancients, saying that all which seems is true, whom St. Thomas had already confuted, remarking "that to suppose all judgments true would be as absurd as to affirm that if one, whose taste was sound, should judge honey to be sweet, he would judge truly ; and in like manner if another, whose taste was infected, should judge it to be bitter, he too would judge truly ; whence it would follow that all opinions were equally true,"[†] an error disclaimed even by Gentiles, as by Cicero, saying of the various opinions of philosophers, "*Quorum opinioniones cum tam variæ sint, tamque inter se dissidentes ; alterum fieri profecto potest, ut earum nulla ; alterum certe non potest, ut plus una vera sit.*"[‡]

What is still more deplorable, the multitude were, in the mean while, left as much unprovided with any true ground of certainty as the investigators themselves. Some took refuge in the persuasion that alleged grace may give certainty, which put an end at once to reasoning, for the most imbecile and ignorant reader, after violating all the natural rules of good sense, may laugh at us when we are unable to comprehend what he believes or wishes to believe. "It is that I have grace and you have not," he will reply, which is certainly a very short way to sustain all errors ; but such a principle, wretched as it was, could only deceive a small number : the multitude could never adopt it as the basis of their certainty. The spirit of confusion and giddiness which possessed men, when first these opinions became general, is a matter of history : no one knew what to hold or maintain. The Palatinate changed its religion five times in the course of one century.§ All indeed were of opinion that their particular view was certain and clear ; but, as Pelisson remarks, "a doctrine could not be very plain when two men of great talents and knowledge, both, as they

tell us, 'raised up by God to re-establish the state of the Church,' both taking the Scriptures for their rule of faith, came to a contrary conclusion respecting it, when their followers too, all enlightened philosophic men, all likewise raised up by God to continue the great work of re-establishing the state of the Church, have not been able to agree together for three hundred years." The people, therefore, thrown upon a wide sea of doubt, and driven hither and thither by every wind of novel doctrine, presented a strange and fearful spectacle, that might well have awakened salutary thoughts in erring breasts, for how could such a result be reconciled with the fact of the Christian revelation ? The world had been for a long time divided between two religions, the Pagan and the Judaic—the one a religion of uncertainty, the other one of certainty : a probability was all that any one could hope to discern under the first, for the wisest of the Greeks could only be said by his disciple to have chosen a manner of debate most likely to discover to him what was nearest or most like to truth—"quid veri simillimum esset ;"^{*} while the latter, receiving all moral truths from divine tradition, had no occasion to seek elsewhere, among the opinions of men, for what they already possessed. The Messiah came who was to perfect this latter : every thing was finished, every thing established. By what terrible and unaccountable adventure, or by what sudden change of the divine will, did he suffer men to fall back again into that region of uncertainty from which he had drawn them ?

We have seen, in general, what part was allotted to philosophy in ages of faith, with regard to religion and moral truths. The holy fathers and the scholastic doctors received philosophy in this sphere, as the humble attendant upon theology, and as only concerned with declaring, developing, explaining, and demonstrating the truth already known. It constituted the scientific knowledge of what, without it, was simply known. The simple knowledge of duty and truth belonged to all, but the science of these to only a few, and scholastic philosophy was nothing else but the scientific knowledge of those things which, otherwise, were known simply by every one.

The scholastic wisdom was faith combined with criticism, ascetic piety with the most accurate judgment, formed upon psycholo-

^{*} Duns Scot. *Metaph. Lib. iii. c. 1.*

[†] *P. i. q. lxxxv. art. 2.*

[‡] *De Nat. Deorum, Lib. i. c. 2.*

[§] *Jerusalem and Babel.*

^{*} *Tuscul. i. 4.*

gical observations. "Thine eye," says Hugo of St. Victor, "can see nothing well unless it see itself."* "One thing is faith," he says elsewhere, "and another is the knowledge of faith: the knowledge of faith can exist without faith, and many believe without having the knowledge of all the things which they believe; but they know those who have that knowledge, and by adhering to the perfect they are saved.—Boves arabant, et asinæ pascebantur juxta eos."† Here then we see the great use of the scholastic method, why it is so precious to the church and so formidable to its adversaries. "In a word," says Berthier, "it serves to fix the sense of revelation, and to unravel the artificial language of an innovator. In itself, scholastic theology, or philosophy, is nothing but the doctrine of Scripture and tradition, treated according to dialectic method. The method is only the instrument accessary, the doctrine is the foundation and the substance,"‡ so that a St. Thomas did not differ from a simple disciple of the Christian faith, in that he had discovered more truths, or in that he held them with a firmer assent, for the same faith belonged to all, and the same motive, the authority of God speaking by the Church, and therefore, with the same firmness and alacrity every intelligence was alike captivated to the obedience of faith, but the difference consisted in this only, that as the simple disciples knew and held truths revealed by God, the scholastic had learned to perceive the causes and reasons of the doctrines, and was able to demonstrate their origin and to overthrow the objections of heretics.§ This apparent limitation was, however, in reality an extension of the powers of philosophy, for "authority," as St. Augustin says in his treatise on true religion, "requires docility, and conducts man to reason;" and as Bonald says, "so far from man discovering truth by the sole force of his reason, he has not reason until he has known truth."|| St. Augustin speaks elsewhere still more explicitly: "although man," saith he, "cannot believe in God if he does not comprehend something, nevertheless this same faith, by which he believes, gives him strength to compre-

hend more truths; for there are some things which we do not believe before comprehending them, and there are others which we do not comprehend before we believe in them."

This philosophy of demonstration or development was not only permitted, but promoted with every possible encouragement during the ages of faith, so that nothing but the unavoidable interruption, arising from wars and the invasions of barbarians, caused it any impediment. It constituted, in fact, the study and employment of learned Christians in all ages. Though the actual finding of truth is only effected by the Son of God, yet philosophy, as Clemens Alexandrinus says, was considered one of the means which conduce to its attainment.*

St. Augustin writes to Consentius, desiring that "those things which he holds with the firmness of faith, he may be able also to behold with the light of reason." "Forbid it," he says, "that God should hate in us that which renders us more excellent than other animals." "Forbid it," I say "that we should believe, in order that we should not accept reason, or inquire, when we could not even believe unless we had rational souls." To show, therefore, that right reason is never in opposition with revealed truth, is the grand object of St. Thomas, in his admirable work against the Gentiles—"The things," saith he, "which are naturally imprinted in reason, are so manifestly true, that it is impossible to suppose them false; and what is held by faith, is so evidently confirmed by the testimony of God, that it is not allowable to believe it false. Since then, falsehood alone is contrary to truth, it is impossible that the truth of faith should be contrary to the principles which reason naturally acknowledges."† Hence the *Summa Sententiarum* of Hugo of St. Victor, begins with the words of St. Peter: "We ought to be ready to give to every one that asks a reason of the faith and hope which is in us." Pregnant words, to which must be ascribed the whole scholastic philosophy.

St. Anselm shows the importance which was attached to such studies in his time, and his words are very remarkable, as showing what clear and accurate notions were then generally entertained, with regard to the method of philosophy. "I am often desired by many," he says, "to

* *De Arrha Animæ.*

† Hug. S. Vict. *Eruditionis Theolog.* Lib. i. tit. 18.

‡ *Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles xii. xiii. xiv. xv. Hist. de l'Eglise, xiv.*

§ *Ventura de Methodo Philosophandi, cap. ii. a. 1.*

|| *Legislation prim. i. 354.*

* *Stromat. Lib. i. c. 20.*

† *S. Thom. cont. Gentes, Lib. i. c. 7.*

commit to writing the reasons which I am accustomed to render concerning our faith to persons who inquire respecting it; for they say that these reasons please and satisfy them, which they desire, not that by reason they should approach to faith, but that they may be delighted with the contemplation of these things, which they believe, with their intelligence, and also in order that they may be always prepared to give a reason to every one who asks of the hope which is in us.* He then lays down the rule in these terms, "as the right order requires that we should believe the profound things of the Christian faith, before we presume to discuss them by reason; so it would seem to me negligence, if after we are confirmed in the faith, we should not study to understand what we believe. Therefore," he continues, "since I see your importunity, I will endeavour, by God's assistance, and by the aid of your prayers, not so much to show what you seek, as to inquire with you concerning it." On further interrogation, he makes the disputant say, "this I ask, not that you should confirm me in faith, but that me, who am confirmed, you should make joyful, by the understanding of that truth."† Richard of St. Victor speaks to the same effect—"We should endeavour," he says, "always, as far as is lawful or possible to comprehend by reason what we hold by faith;‡" and again, says he, elsewhere, "if we do not believe we cannot understand; knowledge must enter by faith; it must not indeed rest in the entrance, but always it should hasten on to interior and profound things, and by every study and diligence provide that we may be able to advance daily in the understanding of these things, which we hold by faith; these are the best riches, these are eternal delights."§ Similarly speaks Henry of Ghent, quoting St. Augustin, "ita enim jam sum affectus, ut quod sit verum non credere solum, sed etiam intelligendo apprehendere desiderem." In this sense, therefore, it is evident that the scholastic philosophers would have readily assented to the sentence of Lord Bacon, that "the use of human reason in religion extendeth to the mysteries themselves. But how? By way of illustration and not by way of argument." Not even the boldest logician, who carried natural argument the farthest in theology, attempted to justify their em-

ployment of reason, on any other grounds. The friends of Abailard took care to show that it was from his having to refute the heretical opinions of Roscelin, who appealed to reason and philosophy, that he was obliged in his reply to have recourse to the same authorities, and that when he was censured by some for so doing, he had excused himself by citing the example of St. Jerome and other fathers, and by observing that not only a theologian, but a simple Christian, was obliged to give a reason for his faith, and to convince pagans, Jews, and heretics, that we hold nothing contrary to good sense and reason, and that for this purpose the thoughts of the ancient philosophers might be brought forward with great utility.*

"The great ascetic teachers themselves conformed to this discipline:" Wadding remarks, "that St. Bonaventura always employed philosophy and human sciences to defend the dogmas of the Catholic faith."† Who more opposed to the philosophy of the world, than the friar Savonarola, and yet in his work on the Triumph of the Cross, he shows, by the light of reason, that there is nothing contrary to reason in the faith of the Catholic Church—that her belief concerning sanctification is not irrational—that her judicial doctrine is not irrational—that the institution of seven sacraments is not irrational—that the doctrine of the Eucharist in particular is not irrational—that the rites connected with the sacraments are not irrational—that the ceremonies of the Church generally are not irrational.‡ And the principle of his work he explains, saying, "that they are to be especially commended, who having first embraced faith by the divine inspiration, afterwards endeavour to confirm others in it, by adducing reasons of this faith and hope according to the exhortation of Peter, the prince of the apostles, and of our Lord Christ."

Such being then the object and method of philosophy, during these ages, it is obvious that the human reason so far from being confined and clogged by the Christian discipline, was delivered by it from innumerable obstacles, and left free to exercise itself over an immeasurable range of subjects, comprising every thing which could yield the mind of man utility or satisfaction.

* Vie d'Abeill. Lib. 11.

† Ann. Min. tom. iv. 143.

‡ Savonarol. Triumph. Crucis, sive de Veritate Fidei, Lib. iii. 8.

* Cur Deus Homo, Lib. i. c. 1. + C. 2. c. 15.

† Ric. S. Vict. Allegoriæ Taber. fœd.

§ Id. de Trinitate, p. i. Lib. i. c. 3.

The objects of the fathers' philosophy are God, the relation of God to the world, and of men to God. In treating on the first, it was shown that there is a threefold knowledge of God, through the image, resemblance, or representation of God—through external nature, and through revelation. Examples of the physico-theological cosmology, to be found in the fathers, occur in St. Gregory Nazianzen's twenty-fourth Oration, and in the Treatise on the Orthodox Faith, by St. John Damascenus.* In the works of St. Augustin are found arguments from ontology,† and from ethics.‡ The relation of God to the world was shown in the history of the Creation, which was advanced against Manichæans and Gnostics by St. Augustin and St. Athanasius. In the eternal foreknowledge of God,§ proof was found to refute the astrological and stoic fate;|| and the omniscience of God was shown to be reconcilable with human freedom. The origin of evil was placed in man's freedom and the power of wicked spirits.¶ Man was considered in relation to body, soul, and spirit, by St. Justin and the early fathers; the soul, however, was shown to be spiritual by Nemesius, Augustin,** and by Claudius Mamertinus of Vienne.†† Immortality was ascribed to it either essentially, as by St. Augustin, or as a free gift of God, as by St. Justin and Arnobius. Of ethics, or the relation of men to God, the foundation is shown to be the divine will, subjective or objective, and from the side of men, obedience. The knowledge of duty is from revelation, and its motives are the fear of God's power,‡‡ the hope of salvation,§§ and the disinterested or mystic love of the highest good, according to St. Augustin, whom Tennemann styles the greatest thinker of the Latin fathers, who desired to unite in one living spirit mysticism and dialectics.

The scholastic philosophy is supposed to have commenced in the Palatine schools, founded by Charlemagne, in which, according to the system of Marciianus Capella, Cassiodorus, and Bede, were taught the seven liberal arts, the division of which, Hugo de St. Victor says is traced to Pytha-

goras;* and between which he says "there is such a coherence that where one is wanting the others cannot make a philosopher."† Grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics, formed the trivium; geometry, arithmetic, astrology, and music, the quadrivium. In the Palatine, as well as in the monastic schools, and subsequently in the universities, were taught theology and philosophy, with great zeal and perseverance, and as Tennemann says, "an intense interest for the perfection of the intelligence and of the attainment of knowledge in union with faith."‡ The rules given for the conduct of instruction and the practice of the schools, confirm all these statements respecting the method of philosophy in the middle ages.

"Philosophic teaching," as Alanus de Insulis defines preaching, "was an instruction to form men by the rule of reason, emanating from the fountain of authority. This ought to be its form," adds the universal Doctor, "that it should take its beginning from theological authority, as from its proper foundation, from the Gospels, Psalms, and Epistles of Paul; but occasionally may be inserted the sayings of the Gentiles, and the authority of the philosophers."§ The great scholastics of the middle age taught in the ancient manner, as described by St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, who had been a disciple of Origen; he used to begin, we are told, with the praises of philosophy, that is, of true wisdom, which consisted in the knowledge of one's self, and of the end for which one came into the world. He then censured the ignorance and blindness of those who were indifferent to instruction, and showed that philosophy was necessary to the attainment of true piety. In proceeding without any air of disputation, he used to testify a goodness and affection, as a man who sought not to conquer them in argument, but to save them and to communicate to them real good. He was not

* *Eruditionis Didasc. Lib. iii. 3.*

† *Id. Lib. iii. c. 5.*

‡ In General see Cæs. Bulæi *Hist. Universitat. Paris*, vol. vi. Crevier, *Hist. de l'Universit. Paris*, vol. vii. Launjus de *Celebrioribus Scholis*, and de *Varia Aristot. Fortuna in Acad. Paris*. Thomasius de *Doctrinis Scholasticis*. Meichior Canus. *Fabricii Bibl. Lat. Mediæ et Inf. Ætatis*. Tiedemann's *Gesch. der Speculat. Philosophie*, iv. v. Buhle's *Lehrb. des Gesch. der Philos.* viii. ix. Tennemann's *Gesch. der Philos.* viii. ix. Frhr. von Eberstein *Natürliche Theologie der Scholastiker* Leipz. 1803. Cuvier, *Hist. de la Philosophie*. § *Alani de Insulis summa de Arte, Prædicatoria*, cap. 1.

* *Lib. i. 3.*

† *De Lib. Arbitrio, Lib. ii. 5. 15.*

‡ *De Trin. Lib. viii. 3.*

§ *Lactant. de Ira Dei.*

|| *August. de Civ. D. v. 9.*

¶ *Tertull. August. Origen. S. J. Damas.*

** *De Quantitate Animæ, c. 1.*

†† *De Statu Animæ, iii.*

‡‡ *Tertul. de Penit. 4.*

§§ *Lactant. Lib. iii. c. 2.*

content with giving superficial instructions; he used to dig deep and penetrate into their minds, interrogating, and then replying to them in the Socratic manner. After having prepared and excited them to receive instruction, he used to begin with teaching the use of a solid logic; he next directed them to physical science, to mathematics, geometry, and astronomy, which would lead them to consider the power and wisdom of the Creator; and, lastly, to ethics, which he treated not in a dry abstract manner, but by examples, and causing them to make observations upon their own internal movements. After these studies he led them to theology, as the most necessary, and caused them to read all that had been written by the ancients, whether Greeks or barbarians, in order that they might know the strong and the weak side of all opinions, and learn what utility could be drawn from each sect; but he exhorted them to attach themselves to no one philosopher, but to God alone, and to his prophets: he then

explained the holy Scriptures, of which he was the most learned interpreter of the time. At the mere announcement of the parts of such high discourse, methinks, reader, I can read contentment in thy looks; but what follows next will please thee more. For from this point we proceed to show that the philosophy of the clean of heart was exempt from the evils of the tree whereof Eve tasted; that its spirit was humble, its tendency practical and living, its expression clear, not with confusion mixed, its form beauteous, so as to warm the imagination with poetic flame, while the intelligence found what was solid and exact. Finally, we shall observe, that it was Catholic, and endued with virtue to awake and strengthen all generous and noble affections. To what I now disclose, be thy clear ken directed; and thou plainly shalt behold who were the guides that could conduct the world to its true light, and to the vision which is the recompense of faith.

CHAPTER X.

ERITIS sicut Dii," were the Serpent's words in paradise, which caused the rational creature to fall from its happy state; and the secret voice in the wilderness of this lower world, which continues to entail misery on the human race, is but their echo. "You shall be as gods," and men believe the promise. Homer, if we admit the opinion of Cicero, seems to have discerned this fact in speaking of the song of the Syrens; for it was not by the novelty or variety of their music, that they were accustomed to draw back those, who were sailing by; but it was their professing to know many things that caused men to adhere to their rocks, by the desire of knowledge; for thus they invite Ulysses:

Δεῦρ' ἄγ' ἰδὼν, πολὺαὶν Ὀδυσσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος
Ἀχαιῶν,

Νῆα κατὰστησον, ἵνα νοῦτέρην ὅπ' ἀκούσῃς.
Οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῇδε παρήλασε νηὶ μελαίνῃ,
Πρὶν γ' ἡμέων μελίγηρνον ἀπὸ στομάτων ὅπ'
ἀκούσαι·

Ἄλλ' ὅγε τερψάμενος νείται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς.
Ἴδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ', ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
Ἀργεῖοι, Τρῶές τε, θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν·
Ἴδμεν δ', ὅσσα γένηται ἐπὶ χθονὶ πολυβοτείρῃ.*

"Homer saw," says the philosopher, "that the fable could not be credible, if such a man were retained by some little songs; they promised knowledge."† How profoundly the clean of heart, in ages of faith, had estimated the danger, may be

* Od. M. 184.

† De Finibus Bonor. et Mal. Lib. v. 18.

witnessed in all their writings, which had relation to philosophy. "All heretics in general," says St. Augustin, "deceived by the promise of science, and condemn those whom they find simply believing."* "From consulting the holy Scriptures," he says, "it appears that the demons have been so named, on account of their science; the demons have science, but without charity, and, hence they are puffed up with monstrous pride."† This is all that they can give thee, Christians, now in the garden of the Church; now once more happy as in paradise, if ye seek no happier state, and know to know no more.

"It is a great height of science," says Richard of St. Victor, "perfectly to know oneself. A great and lofty mountain is the full knowledge of the rational spirit; that mountain surpasses the summit of all worldly sciences, and from aloft looks down upon all philosophy. What found Aristotle, or Plato, and what did the crowd of philosophers find? Truly, and without doubt, if they had ascended this mountain to find themselves, the study would have been sufficient for them."‡ It was for this end that Pope Innocent III. wrote his Treatise on the Contempt of the World, and the Misery of the Human Condition; for hear what he says himself, "ad depredendam superbiam, quæ caput est omnium vitiorum, vilitatem humanæ conditionis utcunque descripsi."§ The philosophic writings of the middle ages were not calculated to infuse men with self and vain conceit, as if the flesh which walled about their life were brass impregnable. The universal Doctor seasons his instructions to the student by desiring him to remember death:

*Illicitos, miserande puer, compesce furores,
Scito quod ad mortem commovet hostis eos.
Aufer ab his mentem, miserosque videto dolores,
Altera plus istis sunt meditanda tibi.
Esto memor quod pulvis eris, et vermis esca,
In gelida putris quando jacebis humo.
Non erit in Mundo qui te velit ultra videre,
Cum tua rancidior fit carne rupta caro.
Heu! cur gaudet homo, cur ille superbit; et ad
quid?
Cur ducit fastus, qui cinis est, et erit?*

"O man" he exclaims, in his summary of the preacher's art, "Behold thyself in the triple mirror, and thou wilt renounce pride; there is a triple mirror in which thou shouldest behold thyself—the mirror

of Scripture—the mirror of nature—the mirror of the creatures. In the first, thou wilt read thy condition—in the second, thou wilt see thy misery—in the third, thou wilt consider thy guilt."* How well he had applied this to himself, can be witnessed in his Penitential, which begins with the words of Jeremiah, "A A A Domine Deus quoniam puer ego sum, et nescio loqui," on which he thus comments:—If Jeremiah, sanctified from the womb, chosen a prophet by the Lord, and taught by divine inspiration, feared to assume the office of a preacher, and confessed himself a child and a stutterer, how shall we presume to undertake the sacerdotal functions? If poverty should impel us to orders, the necessity of the Church bind us, the authority of superiors oblige us, we cry A. Any insult of poverty we would sustain rather than undertake with peril the burden of the priesthood; yet if necessity should exist, if the authority of superiors should reasonably enjoin us, we prepare ourselves with corresponding manners, and reputing ourselves unworthy, exclaim with Jeremiah, "A A A Domine Deus."†

If we look to the philosophic writings of the ages of faith, we shall soon perceive that the schoolmen, as well as the ascetic theologians, were, like St. Bernard, humble from a profound estimate of themselves, and of their own worthlessness, and from a wish to be humbled by that knowledge. In the first place, this spirit is remarkably developed in all passages which relate to the proper limits for the exercise of the human intelligence.

St. Gregory teaches us, that "whatever we say of God is unworthy of God, inasmuch as it is we who say it, and because of the manner in which we say it. According to Dionysius, the school taught that God is neither a being, nor a substance, nor a life, nor an intelligence, nor goodness, nor wisdom, nor power, nor beauty, if we consider the said perfections, as they are apprehended by us, or expressed in our language; for as St. Thomas says, "all our conceits and words, of what kind soever, bring imperfection with them, either of part, if they be abstract, or of composition, if they be concrete; consequently they are always incomplete and inadequate." Many flippant objections, of modern infidels, founded on their notions of God's attributes, could therefore

* Lib. ii. de Gen. contra Manich. 25.

† Id. de Civit. Dei, Lib. ix. 20.

‡ Ric. S. Vict. de Preparatione Animi ad Contemplationem, cap. 75.

§ Cap. iii.

* Sum. de Arte Præd. cap. iii.

† Alani de Insulis liber Penitentialis.

have found no listener in the schools. "Whom from all, and above all, I seek, love, and desire," says Albert the Great, "is not sensible or imaginable; but above all that is sensible and intelligible."* And Duns Scotus observes, "Infinitum in quantum infinitum est ignotum."†

Let us observe how this spirit came into action in the schools. "He who asks," says Peter Lombard, "why did God wish to make the world, asks the cause of the will of God; but all efficient cause is greater than that which is effected; and nothing is greater than the will of God, therefore its cause must not be sought for." St. Augustin says, "if his will had a cause, there would then be something antecedent to his will, which it would be impious to assert. If God foresaw the number that would be lost, then is God not good? Well, perhaps, not. What have you then to do but to tremble at his power? What, are you, miserable creature, surrounded by the evidence of his existence, to criticise his actions? The fear of God is then the beginning of wisdom: God could make them have a good will. Why does he not? Quia noluit. Cur noluit? Ipse novit. I can seek no farther cause than his will.‡ Thus we see how faithful to the teachers of the school was the great poet of the ages of faith, who, to the question, how can this be just? would answer—

"O animals of clay! O spirits gross!
The primal will, that in itself is good,
Hath from itself, the chief good, ne'er been
mov'd;
Justice consists in consonance with it,
Derivable by no created good,
Whose very cause depends upon its beam."§

"In talibus magis recurrendum est ad orationis suffragium quam ad ingenium rationis," says Pope Innocent III. of the mysteries of faith, the annunciations of which were to their intelligence as the columns of Hercules.

το πάρος
δ' ἔστι σοφοῖς ἀβαν
κἀσφόρις.||

To all who sought to proceed farther, the school replied, with Dante, "so 'tis will'd where will and power are one: ask

thou no more." "Let those who are not satisfied with such answers, seek men more learned than Augustin," but, adds St. Thomas, "let them beware lest they find more presumptuous."* St. Clement of Alexandria shows the similarity of the Christian and Socratic method, "for the knowledge of our ignorance," he says, "is the first fruit of instruction to him walking in truth. Being ignorant he will seek, and seeking he will find a master: finding he will believe him, and believing he will hope in him, and then by love will be made similar to him; this is the method which Socrates showed to Alcibiades. Do you not think that I have knowledge of justice? Yes, if you find it. Do you not think I can find it? Yes, if you seek it. But, do you not think that I will seek it? Yes, if you think that you are ignorant."†

The sophists, who, from time to time, rose up against the Catholic philosophy, were all sons of Porus, as Plato would say, but none of them had Penia for their mother; they were all full—they wanted no knowledge: whereas, the Catholic philosophers, like those whom he commended, were neither ignorant nor conscious of possessing complete knowledge, the sense of which imperfection made them long for wisdom; that is, made them philosophers in the old original Greek sense; for, as Frederick Schlegel remarks, the original followers of philosophy regarded it as being only what the word indicates—the highest desire of knowledge, and the intellectual effort after godly truth.‡

"Some," says Lactantius, "thought that they could know all things, which was of God; others that they could know nothing, which was of cattle. Wisdom was in neither of these, 'est enim aliquid medium quod sit hominis, id est, sapientia cum ignoracione conjuncta atque temperata.'"§ They who would observe how this was cultivated by Catholic philosophers, may consult Muratori's admirable work, "De Ingeniorum Moderatione in Religionis Negotio." There is a playful side to most things, by turning to which discourse may be enlivened. Stephen Pasquier cites an amusing passage from an old author, to show with what mistrust men regarded the profession of more complete knowledge than belonged to the present condition of the human intelligence. "In the year

* De adhærendo Deo, c. 7.

† Duns Scot. Physica, text 35.

‡ Dist. xlv. Lib. 1. § Par. xix.

§ Pindar. Olym. iii.

* Lib. de Spirit. et lit. c. 33.

† Strom. v. 3.

‡ Philosophie der Sprache, 226.

§ De Falsa Sapientia.

1445, there was," saith he, "a young man of twenty in the university of Paris, who knew all the seven liberal arts, knew how to play on all instruments, how to sing, to paint, to illuminate books, better than any one else in all Paris; in warlike matters no one more expert than he, and no better swordsman: he was master in arts, master in medicine, doctor in law, doctor in decretals, doctor in theology, and truly he disputed with us in the College of Navarre, who were more than fifty of the most perfect clerks of the university, and more than 3000 other clerks, and answered so high to all the questions, that it was a perfect wonder for any one to believe who had not seen it. Item, he spoke very subtle Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and many other tongues. Truly, if a man could live one hundred years without eating, drinking, or sleeping, he would not have learnt all that he knew by heart; and, for a certainty, he puts us in great fear, for he knows more than human nature can know, and we have it in Scripture that Antichrist will feign himself a Christian." This was not an exaggerated picture, for George Chastelain, in the time of Charles VII., speaks of the same youth,

J'ai veu par excellence
Un jeune de vingt ans
Avoir toute science,
Et les degrez montant,
Soy se vantant sçavoir dire
Ce qu'onques fut escrit
Par seule fois le lire
Comme un jeune Antichrist.

But let us return to what is serious:

To maintain their pretensions to the character of teachers, "the scholastic philosophers did not," as Herschel says of the successors of the early Greek philosophy, "adopt the tone of men who had nothing further to learn." Speaking of the depth of Catholic wisdom, St. Augustin says, "Cum consummaverit homo tunc incipit." Their style is, accordingly, that of Pope Innocent III., saying, "Vellem doceri potius quam docere."* St. John Climachus, concludes with a similar profession, in his letter to Abbot John Raychu, saying, "For we, also, are yet to be numbered in the class of disciples." Nevertheless, as Guido the Carmelite says of St. Augustin, "Although these men may speak humbly, they speak wisely, and truth is on their lips." It was the Catholic manner, as well as the Pythagorean, when asked nothing, to say

nothing; and, indeed, the similarity between the two disciplines in this respect has often struck observers: as may be witnessed in the letter of Hermolaus Barbarus to Siginino, in which he speaks of "the candid and well-constituted minds of which the highest property is never to teach, but always to wish to be taught, to hate judgment, and to love silence. In this," he remarks, "the whole discipline of the Pythagoreans consisted; and this is most intimately allied to that virtue which, under the name of humility, is so celebrated among Christians, which for every man is the most certain way to the glory of eternal salvation, and which to a man of letters is the necessary companion, without which we shall never be either docile in finding or prudent in judging;" for "non potest non indoctus esse qui se doctum credit." Two of the most beautiful works of mystic philosophy in the middle ages were entitled by its author, Thomas à Kempis, *Hospitale Pauperum* and *Manuale Parvulorum*. St. Clemens Alexandrinus denominates the Christian discipline the state of mystic youth. "In respect to truth," saith he, "we are all as children and youths before God; we are a youthful race, learning new good things; we are always in the flower of youth, flourishing without old age—*ἀὲι νέοι καὶ ἀὲι ἡνίοχοι καὶ ἀὲι καυοί*. The never-decaying wisdom remains with us as our mother, for we regard the Church as our mother."* Within her pale all who co-operated with the sacramental grace were born according to her paschal supplication, though by sex or by age differing, into one and the same infancy. But what a sweet and wondrous transformation was here implied! "This is the height of philosophy," says St. Chrysostom, "to be simple with prudence: this is an angelic life; for the soul of a little boy is free from all diseases: it retains no memory of injuries; and although beaten by his mother, he always seeks her and prefers her before all others. If you would show a queen adorned with a diadem, he would not prefer her to his mother covered with tatters and rags: he esteems things not on account of poverty or riches, but from love; and therefore, we are told, that of such is the kingdom of heaven."†

If, in short, we say with Novalis, that innocence and ignorance are sisters, which dwell in heaven and seek only the noblest

* *Myst. Misse*, v. 2.

* Clem. Alex. *Pæd. Lib.* i. c. 5, 6.

† S. Chrysostom. *Hom.* 62. in *Matth.*

and most tried men,* we must conclude, from a review of the middle ages, that they found their true disciples in the Catholic schools. "Zachæus, make haste to come down, because this day I must lodge in thy house," was the admonition made to every one on first entering them; for such is the address of divine truth when about to visit the soul of man. Descend quickly from this height of proud science, that in a clean heart thou mayest receive and see thy God. Humility, however, was not confined to the limitation of the curiosity of man: it was employed also to guide him in the path which leads to true knowledge.

"The beginning of discipline," says Hugo of St. Victor, "is humility,—that we should hold no science, no writing vile—that we should not blush to learn from any one; and that, having acquired science, we should not despise others. Many wish to seem wise before the time. I have known some who, while they were ignorant of the first elements, would not condescend to attend to any but the highest things, and thought that they could only become great if they read the writings or heard the words of the wisest men. 'We have seen them,' they say; 'we have read them; they have often spoken to us; these first and most celebrated men have known us.' Sed utinam me nemo cognoscat, et ego cuncta noverim. You boast to have seen, not to have understood, Plato; I deem it, then, unworthy of you to hear me. I am not Plato, nor have I deserved to see Plato. He may suffice to you. You have drunk from the fountain of philosophy, but I only wish that you might still thirst."†

Beautiful are their admonitions, to remind men that the life of faith is not that of glory, "in which alone," as St. Augustin says, "without any temptation of pride, they can adhere to the supreme good." "If you have not the wings of an eagle flying to the stars of heaven," says Thomas à Kempis, "you have those of the simple dove making her nest in the rocks, and daily meditating on the most holy wounds of Jesus. Humble Francis found more sweetness and delight in the passion of Christ, than the subtle astronomer in calculating the spaces of heaven."‡ "Let no one seek by human wisdom," says Richard of St. Victor, "those things which are

above human intelligence."* We find even the poets, as Gui du Faur de Pibrac, commending the learned ignorance of their masters in philosophy, which could confound the arrogance of talkative sophists,† and later writers not much conversant with theology, like Montaigne, exclaiming, "O what a sweet, soft, wholesome pillow is ignorance and the absence of curiosity, to rest a head well made!"

It is evident that they were profoundly impressed with the sentiment thus in after-ages expressed by Milton, when he says, "How happy were it for this frail, and, as it may be called, mortal life of man, since all earthly things which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use are withal so cumbersome and full of trouble, if knowledge, yet which is the best and lightsomest possession of the mind, were, as the common saying is, no burden, and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body it did not with a heavy advantage overlay upon the spirit! But he that hath obtained wisdom, remembering that he must improve the entrusted gifts of God, and finding in the discharge of his commission the greatest variance and offence, cries with the sad prophet Jeremiah, 'Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me, a man of strife and contention!' Nor was this hid from the wise poet Sophocles, who, in that place where Tiresias is called to resolve King Œdipus in a matter which he knew would be grievous, brings him in bemoaning his lot that he knew more than other men."

Again, nothing clearly could be more opposed to the spirit of the scholastic philosophers, and also to the universal sentiment of men during ages of faith, than the Titanic genius of the modern school—that proud deification of man, where, like Prometheus, he sings his own glory. Men, in general, seemed to have shrunk from the idea of being able uniformly to overcome the difficulties arising from the laws of the Creator in the physical order of things, beyond his evident intentions and the obvious necessities of human life. Some works in later times are of a nature that would rather have shocked than interested their feelings. They would have been inclined, with somewhat of the old Greek feeling, to view them as an audacious Titanian effort of barbarian power, and to regard boastful speech with a

* Schristen, ii. 291.

† Hugo S. Vict. Erudit. Didascalice, Lib. ii. c. 14.

‡ Sermonum iii. pars 9.

* Ric. S. Vict. de Eruditione Hominis Interioris, Lib. i. l. 19.

† Gouget, Bibliothèque Franc. tom. xii. 274.

kind of terror, from having retained so much of the same spirit as to be convinced, with Æschylus, that death in silence with dreadful rage pulverizes the high talkers:—

— σιγῶν δ' αὖθροσ
καὶ μέγα φωνοῦντ'
ἐχθραῖς ὄργαις ἀμαθύνει.*

A passage from a chronicle of the middle ages will illustrate their spirit in this respect. What it terms "the proud, vain, useless, blasphemous word" of King Alfonso the astrologer, that if God at the creation had consulted him he would have ordered some things better, filled the devout Spaniards with terror and indignation. "O how much wiser David," exclaims Roderic Santius, "who said, 'Mirabilia opera tua, Domine, et quis cognoscat nimis? Quam magnificata sunt opera tua, Domine. Omnia in sapientia fecisti.' A certain soldier, in a vision, beheld an angel, who announced that sentence was passed upon the king, and that he should lose his kingdom, and, unless he repented, die a cruel death. This soldier, in consequence, went boldly to the king, who was at Burgos, and told him his vision; but the king only laughed at him, and repeated the same blasphemy in answer, and then sent him from his presence. Soon after, being at Segovia a certain hermit of most holy life had a similar vision, which moved him likewise to repair to the court, in order to warn and admonish Alfonso; but the king seemed only to be hardened the more, and the hermit was sent out of his presence with scorn. That night God sent such horrible and unusual tempests and whirlwinds, such thunder and lightning and sheets of flame, that it seemed as if heaven were about to fall, and the royal garments were consumed in the king's room by the celestial fire. The king, astonished, and hardly able to speak through fear, ordered the chamberlain to send for the hermit; but so violent was the storm, that no one durst leave the palace. As soon as they could, however, they went in search of him, and introduced him to the king, who, falling down, said, 'It is I who have sinned.' The hermit then said to him, 'O man, who hath placed wisdom in thy bowels? art thou the counsellor of the Most High? O that thou wouldest be mindful of the words of the wisest of kings, and say, 'Vanitatem et verba mendacii aliena fac a me.' Then the king, in great terror, and expecting death every

* Eumen.

moment, made his confession to the hermit, and publicly retracted the proud words, and immediately the tempest began to subside; but he never raised his eyes from the earth until it had wholly ceased. Then he changed his life for better; but though God had now forgiven him, nevertheless he punished him temporally; for his subsequent life was unfortunate, and he lost his crown, being deprived of it by his own son. Murcia, however, which he had conquered from the Sarassins, would never depart from fidelity to him; for which reason, when he was dying, he ordered that his heart should be transported thither and buried in the church of St. Mary, which he had himself built."*

The application of wisdom to spiritual things is guarded from abuse with great care by the scholastic philosophers. "Desire is often corrupted," says Richard of St. Victor, "when the intelligence is illuminated.† How many boast," he adds, "and wish to be glorious in the eyes of men, not because they have virtues or sanctity, but because they know how, prudently and learnedly, to discuss and dispute concerning virtues. O how much better and more useful would it be to have the gold of science, and not to have the silver of eloquence, with which you might make to yourself an idol! See how perverse and damnable it is to seek spiritual doctrine for ostentation alone, and not for edification! What does it profit, or, rather, how is it not perilous, with great labours and study to seek and investigate, and anxiously wish to know what in no manner you wish to reduce to practice? Often we see that it happens to minds of this kind, by a just judgment of God, that as at first they were spiritually provident for spiritual things, so afterwards they become carnally provident for the things of the flesh."‡ Again, "Often when we speak any thing subtilly with our neighbour, in commendation of divine grace, we glory within ourselves in the subtilty of our language. O the infinite folly of man! And rightly indeed do you say that man can do nothing without grace. This should be our deepest and most subtle thought, that in all our study our first solicitude should be to provide that our reliance may be wholly on grace; and that, whatever we effect, we should ascribe it to divine grace."§ The titles of their controversial works are characteristic of this spirit: thus Lanfranc, arch-

* Roderici Santii Episc. Palentini Hist. Hispanice pars iv. c. 5.

† De Eruditione Hom. Inter. Lib. i. l. 40.

‡ Id. Lib. i. l. c. 39.

§ Id. Lib. i. c. 3.

bishop of Canterbury, inscribed his book against Berenger, Lanfrancus Misericordia Dei Catholicus, Berangario Catholicæ Ecclesiæ Adversario.

"There are many," continues Richard of St. Victor, "who, when they receive the light of truth, immediately ascribe this to their merits or to their studies, magnifying and exalting themselves, and despising all others in comparison. The soul says to itself, 'Super omnes docentes me intellexi,' and endeavours to apply to itself that sentence of Solomon, 'Præcessi sapientia omnes qui fuerunt ante me.' On the contrary we ought to give glory to Him from whom we have received intelligence."*

"Qui confidunt in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem; assumunt pinnas ut aquilæ. It is above human nature to have wings, and at volition to fly aloft to the Highest. What are these wings but a certain power of contemplation, which enables us to penetrate into the highest mysteries of hidden wisdom? But no one should presume of his own strength, or ascribe to his merits such an exaltation of intelligence; for it is the reward of divine, not of human, merit."† How interesting are these comments of the school upon the words of St. Augustin, "Noli putare te ipsam esse lucem!"

Let us hear John Scot Erigena:—"The Father is light, and fire, and heat; and the Son is light, and fire, and heat; and the Holy Ghost is light, and fire, and heat: for the Father illuminates, the Son illuminates, and the Holy Ghost illuminates: for from them is derived all science and wisdom. The Father burns, the Son burns, and the Holy Ghost burns; for they together consume our sins, and convert us like a holocaust, by *theos*; that is, deification into their unity. The Father warms, the Son warms, and the Holy Ghost warms; for with one and the same heat of charity they cherish and nourish us, and, as if from a certain information of our imperfection after the fall of the first man, lead us into the perfect man, into the plenitude of the age of Christ. But the perfect man is Christ, in whom are all things consummated, the plenitude of whose age is the consummation of the salvation of the whole church, which is constituted of angels and men."‡

With thoughts so deep and humble their language respecting themselves naturally corresponded. Let us hear Scot again, who

concludes his great work in the following words:—"Such is the matter of this work, divided into five books; concerning which, if any one should find that we have written any thing unknown and superfluous, let him impute it to our intemperance and want of attention, and with a pious heart let the humble contemplator excuse the human indigence as yet oppressed with the fleshly tabernacle; for, as I think, there is nothing as yet in this darksome life perfect in human studies, so as to be without all error. Since even the just are not called just, as yet living in the flesh, because they are just, but because they wish to be just, and, seeking the perfect future justice, are so styled merely from the affection of their minds. But if there should smile in it any thing useful pertaining to the edification of the Catholic faith, let it be ascribed to God alone, who alone can unravel the hidden things of darkness, and introduce to himself, deceived by no error, but cleansed from all errors, those who seek him. Let him, unanimous in the charity of the Spirit, return thanks with us to the Universal Cause of all good, without whom we can do nothing;—drawn by no lust of reprehension, kindled by no torch of envy, which alone, beyond all other vices, endeavours to break the bonds of charity and fraternity; but, in the peace of all, benevolently receiving the things here composed, and of all beholding them with the pure vision of the mind, or otherwise of all maliciously rejecting and prejudging things before they know what and how they are,—this work I offer, first, to the God of all, who said, Ask, and it shall be given to you—seek, and you shall find—knock, and it shall be opened to you; and then I commit it to you, brother most beloved in Christ, and my co-operator in the studies of wisdom, to be examined and corrected; for it was begun by your exhortation, and by your skill also it has in a manner been brought so far to an end. In the mean while, I trust that you will be content with the things which are already discussed, not considering the virtue of my genius, which is very small or nothing, but the faculty of your solicitude and of my weak but devoted investigation concerning these things, which you ought to defend no less with the strength of your acute intelligence than with the lucubrations of my obtuse contemplation—I do not say with the emulous, but at least with the friends and inquirers of truth. Nor do I think that you will labour much in this; for as soon as such things come into the hands of

* De Eruditione Hom. Inter. Lib. i. l. 13.

† De Contemplatione, i. v. 4. 15.

‡ De Divisione Nat. Lib. iv.

those who rightly philosophize, since they agree with their disputations, not alone will they receive them with a willing mind, but even they will embrace them as their own. But if they should meet with those who are more ready to reprehend than to show compassion, one ought not to contend much with them. Let each one abound in his own sense, until that light cometh which of the light of those falsely philosophizing makes darkness, and converts the darkness of those recognising it into light.*

Such was the philosophic style in the Christian schools. St. Augustin concluded his books on the Trinity with this prayer:—"Domine Deus unus, Deus Trinitas, quæcumque dixi hic de tuo, agnoscant et tui: si quæ de meo, et tu ignosce, et tui. Amen." The same spirit breathes in the last words of his immortal work on the city of God:—"Let those who find that I have said too little or too much pardon me; but let those who find that I have said what is sufficient, return thanks, not to me, but to God."

The language of great Catholic philosophers, who appeared in Italy in the sixteenth century, is tuned to the same humble tone. Thus John Picus of Mirandula, in a letter to Thadæo Ugolino, speaks in these terms:—"If we have made any proficiency, it is the gift of God: to him be praise and thanksgiving;—if we have failed in any thing, it is our imbecility, and let it be imputed to us."† In his Apology, defending gently his opinion respecting the mode of Christ's descent into hell, he cites the authority of Durandus, and adds, "that great theologian of the Dominicans, who perhaps surpasses in learning those masters who oppose me as far as I am surpassed by them." Marsilius Ficinus, describing the character of Cosmo de Medicis, after saying that he had happily philosophized with him during more than twelve years, and that, whatever he may have owed to Plato, he owes no less to Cosmo, concludes with this testimony: "than whose mind nothing amongst men is more humble, and on the other hand nothing more lofty."‡

But let us return to the school in the middle ages, and hear, as its representative, Richard of St. Victor, whose humility continually breaks out. Thus, on one occasion, he stops suddenly, and says, "But it is better to leave this place to be explained by erudite minds, than on such a matter to presume

any thing rashly beyond our strength."¶ On another, he thus apologizes for undertaking to supply a commentary on Ezekiel:—"I know, indeed, that the fathers have more negligently passed over certain places of Scripture through which they could easily have penetrated. Let no one, then, be scandalized if we should say any thing otherwise than what is found in the glosses; let no one be angry if we should wish to collect the scattered ears which remain, or wonder that they to whom it was given to fill so many granaries with the harvest of the Scriptures should have chosen to leave somewhat for the poor. You wish to honour and defend the authority of the ancients, but we never more truly honour the lovers of truth than by seeking, finding, teaching, defending, loving truth. Attend, therefore, to watch, not whether I say any thing new, but whether any thing true. 'Tu vis honorare et defendere veterum auctoritatem, sed nunquam verius honoramus veritatis amatores quam quærendo, inveniando, docendo, defendendo, diligendo veritatem. Attende ergo non utrum dicam aliquid novum, sed verum.' "†

Again, what deep humility breathes in every line that St. Bonaventura ever wrote! In all his works he shows himself the humblest of men. Thus in his book on the Confessional he says, "A simple person, writing for the simple with simplicity, I have ordained the parts of the present little work according as things occurred to my memory rather than according to their natural coherence together, supplicating every one, with all the humility and devotion in my power, thus—

Sis mihi corrector, resecando superflua, lector, Veraque digneris, qua desunt, jungere veris: Omnem defectum pariter studio brevitatis Scribentis tribuas, partim vitio ruditatis."

Above all, in his book "De puritate conscientie," we can observe how humbly he thought of himself, never being ashamed to admit his unintentional errors. All these great men use the words of St. Augustin, in the beginning of his book of Retractions, resolving that "he who cannot have the first part of wisdom, may at least gain the second, which is modesty; and that he who has not been able to say all things not to be repented of, may at least repent having said what he knows he should not have said."‡

* De Divisione Nat. Lib. v.

† Epist. Lib. i. 18.

‡ Mars. Fic. Epist. Lib. i.

• De Contemplatione, Lib. v. 19.

† Explanatio Templi Ezek. c. 10.

‡ In Prolog. Retract.

Gerson speaks in the same manner, "At the table of wisdom, in the refectory of the church militant, at the banquet of Christ, it is right that new dishes should be assiduously supplied, and different aliments provided, in order that what does not please the internal palate of one may provoke the appetite of another; for there is as much diversity of internal tastes as there are tastes of the body. Far be it from me, miserable, to suppose that I could bring excellent meats of my own to the table of wisdom, but every one should bring what he can, and the poverty of one does not detract from the riches of others, but rather serves as a foil to show it to more advantage."

Men talk of the dogmatism of the school; but such charges arise from an indistinctness of idea respecting its functions. Hugo of St. Victor praises the modesty of Dionysius the Areopagite, for tempering his assertions with an *ut estimo*.^{*} And, in general, all the great luminaries of the scholastic world adopted the same tone; for which Montaigne might justly have admired them, as contrasted with those who made him, as he says, hate probable things by planting them for infallible. The words which he so loved, as softening and moderating the temerity of our propositions, perhaps, it is said, I think, and such like, abound in the works of these philosophers.

"Let us inquire then, together, concerning this matter," says St. Anselm, "but you must understand me in the manner in which I desire that all things uttered by me should be taken; that is, if I should say anything which a higher authority does not confirm, although I should seem to prove it by reason, it must not be received as certain, but only as what seems to me, until God shall reveal it better. Moreover, it is to be known, that whatever a man can say, or know, concerning this mystery of the incarnation, there are still higher reasons for it than any which are as yet known."[†] Melchior Canus says of his master in the schools, that he has learned from him to swear by the words of no single master, and yet to avoid presumption in dissenting from any one. "That man," he adds, "was by nature itself moderate, and when he sometimes differed from St. Thomas, he gained, in my opinion, more praise by dissenting than by assenting; such reverence did he evince in dissenting."[‡]

In the conclusion of his treatise, "*De sapientia animæ Christi*," Hugo of St. Victor speaks of those who differ from him, and says, "I do not wish to prejudge any one. Let them see in what sense they hold this, lest, perchance, it should be carnal, pronouncing more what is their own than what is true. As for him, however, who thus believes amiss, I do not compel, but I exhort him to believe well. Let him, who will not believe me, believe himself, until he shall come to that place where he will believe with me; only, in the interim, let each one study with humility to abound in his own sense, and not arrogantly presume."^{*}

A thousand passages of this kind might be produced to show, that these great men, whose hearts were knit in Catholic unity, were deeply imbued with the sentiment expressed in these latter times by Frederick Schlegel, where he says, "Even if the power were given to me, by a magical force of persuasion, to impart my conviction to the generality of the world, I would not desire it; for I could not regard such a command as right or conformable to philosophy. For philosophy can only be a private self-remembrance, and proceed from a personal sentiment and a personal necessity. No communication in philosophy, therefore, can have any other object, than only to excite a living motion, and to set right the result of private sentiment. Whoever earnestly seeks for truth, has already within him a beginning of faith, hope, and charity, in some form or other."[†]

We see then how little resemblance such men bore to him, whom Cicero feared to reprehend, excusing himself by saying, "*Est enim tanti philosophi tamque nobilis audacter sua decreta defendere*."[‡] But, in truth, this humility, in the lovers of wisdom, was one of the privileges of the new race, whose hearts had been made clean; and beyond the chosen multitude one could not expect to find it. As the Greek poet says, "*The furies are older than Minerva*."[§]

The Holy Church hath, from age to age, heard herself reproved by men, resembling each other only in their confidence; to each of whom her doctors might justly have applied the language of the prophet: "*Superbia ejus, et arrogantia ejus, et indignatio ejus plus quam fortitudo ejus*." "Though he provoke to war," used her doctors to say with St. Ambrose, "yet we answer to one attacking as not attacked, for our object

^{*} Lib. Exposit. in Cœlest. Hier. c. 11.

[†] Cur Deus Homo, Lib. i. c. 2.

[‡] De Locis Theologicis, Lib. xii. c. 1.

^{*} Op. Tom. iii. 33.

[†] Philosophie der Sprache, 231.

[‡] De Finibus, ii. 10.

[§] Eumenid.

was to refute a relation, not to repel an injury.* You are older and much wiser than me, might they add, in the words of Minerva to the ministers of wrath,—

φρονεῖν δὲ καὶ μὴ Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν οὐ κακῶς.

While the patience and sweetness of those who utter Catholic wisdom, have often succeeded in persuading men, who seemed at first inflexible, and been rewarded with hearing their submission.

Θέλξαι μ' ἔσκεας, καὶ μεθίσταμαι κόρου.†

The charge, however, which took place in the intellectual character of philosophers and learned men, at the epoch of the great religious revolution, is a fact too important not to be remarked. Joseph Scaliger, whose family pride was itself, indeed, a new phenomenon in the scholastic character, complained, in a letter to Isaac Casaubon, that the manners of the learned were grown more arrogant, and worse in all respects than they had formerly been. "In times past," he says, "there were certain bounds, that minds of this class did not transgress; but now, if Prometheus had wished to make a monster that would exceed the chimera, he would find it in the mind of a pædagogus. At present, no one is learned unless ἀγροῖκος, barbarous, insolent; and this iron age is abandoned by the muses."‡ Alas, they might well look back with regret to the days of Richard of St. Victor, when it was considered a rare thing to find persons, who, if they should make a short accent long, would feel more shame for that vice of language, than for the vice of pride.§

As a last instance, displaying the humility of the clean of heart in relation to the study of philosophy, we must briefly revert to their devout submission to the authority of God, announced by the voice of the Holy Sea.

Man, in a state of innocence, was guided and retained in truth by the authoritative voice of his Maker; and he first began to deviate from the path of truth, when he listened to that voice of opposition, the voice of negation, of criticism, that lying voice "Thou shalt not die." In this, as Petrus Crinitus remarked, the ancient philosophers agree with the Christian wisdom, teaching that nothing is better in life, than to be

subject to the decree of divine truth, and to acquiesce in its majesty.* The submission of Catholics to the church, is an instance, most eminent, of the advantage resulting to the intelligence from the liberty of a clean heart. Let us refer, however, to their writings, at first, in order to observe the fact.—Hear then how Raymund Lully speaks in the prologue to his Art of finding Truth: "If the great deficiency of our words, or that we may speak more sententially, of our genius, or the insufficiency of a translator, should seem to favour any error against the holy Catholic faith, we suppliantly implore the correction of the holy Roman Church." The same expressions occur in the prologue to his lecture on the same art; and again, at the end of his lecture on the figures of the art of demonstrating truth, he says, "If we have said any thing ill, or if we have omitted any thing ill, the fault is to be ascribed to our ignorance and our fragility: we suppliantly implore that it may receive the correction of the holy Roman Church; as also other things which we do, or propose to do, to the exaltation of the knowledge and love of the omnipotent God;" and in the prologue to his book on the fourteen articles of the faith, he says, "Since I, the compiler of this work, am culpable, and a sinner, very poor in science, and merits, and other things which accord with virtues, I submit it to the correction of the holy Roman faith. If in any places of this work, through ignorance and impropriety of words, or their insufficiency to the high matter, I should have said any thing contrary to the holy faith built by our Lord Jesus Christ, and preserved by his chief pontiff St. Peter, and all the prelates of the holy church, subject to the discipline of the Roman faith, suppliantly, and with all the devotion of my heart, I beg that it may receive their correction as the work of a faithful Christian, confessing and protesting that he does not err voluntarily, but alone through ignorance, and because he is unworthy to treat on such lofty subjects." More than twenty times do these professions occur in the different works of this philosopher and martyr.

Without delaying, however, to accumulate passages from writers, more especially theological, whose docility every one is prepared to observe, let us hear the most eminent of that throng of illustrious laymen, who appeared in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. "I have undertaken," says John Picus of Mirandula, "to write my own

* Lib. ii. Epist. 12.

† Eumenid. 900.

‡ Epist. Lib. i. 52.

§ Ric. S. Vic. de Præparat. Animi ad Contemplat. cap. 46.

* De Honest. Discip. Lib. v. 8.

apology, not with a view to attack or wound any other, but merely to defend myself from the most grievous charge of heresy, which, St. Jerome says, every Christian should repel, or he must pass for not being a Christian. Some say that, being only twenty-four years of age, it is presumption in me to dare to treat on the loftiest places of philosophy, and on the sublimest mysteries of the Christian theology; but whatever we have written, or shall write hereafter, is said always with this preface,—that only that is to be counted true and holy which the supreme pontiff, and all those of whose judgment he approves, decree to be true and holy. There are, perhaps, many things in my propositions which may offend pious unlearned ears, and for that reason I have now written this apology: I intreat, therefore, and beseech friends and enemies, pious and impious, learned and unlearned, by the bowels of Jesus Christ our Lord, by the admirable mystery of his descent into hell, by the eternal fire of the damned which, for heretics especially, and the enemies of the holy Roman church, is inextinguishable; by the sacrament of the true and mystical body and blood, by the omnipotence of God, and by the reverence due to the images of his Son, and of his coheirs, that they read without malice, without envy, what I have now written. Let them not read the former propositions, which have not been explained, because we proposed to discuss them before the learned only. We have not published them to be read to all—for there are many impious dogmas of the ancient philosophers, Averroes, Alexander, and many others, which we always, both privately and publicly, declared were aliens from true and right philosophy as well as from faith, though, as a scholastic exercise, after the manner of the Academics, we disputed concerning them in secret conclave amongst a few learned men. These things then learned and illustrious men, both of domestic and foreign academies, will examine—the Holy See will judge; and sitting thereupon Innocent VIII., whose judgment to resist or neglect is impious and flagitious. He is the supreme judge on earth; who represents him who is the judge of quick and dead. He is the dispenser and treasurer of truth; who stands in the place of him who is truth itself, and who, being made flesh, dwelt in us, that he might announce unto us truth.” Of the advantage resulting to the intelligence from such an authority, we shall have occasion to speak anon.—Meanwhile, from the humility, the

transition is smooth to the practical character of the philosophy of the clean of heart, in ages of faith.

Wisdom, according to the scholastic philosophers, is both cognoscitive and appetitive, as making us not only know, but also love and affect what is right. “Knowledge is called science,” says St. Bonaventura, “inasmuch as it comprises truth; and it is called wisdom when this knowledge is accompanied with the love of God.”* “The end of theology,” says Henry of Ghent, “is practical, appertaining to life and manners.”†

“The end of theology,” says Melchior Canus, “is the same as that of the holy Scriptures, and of all divine scriptures: the end is love,” as Augustin and Gregory remark; “therefore, theology tends not chiefly to contemplation, but to love.”‡ St. Bonaventura expresses himself in these remarkable terms, in the prologue to his Books of Sentences. “For if we consider the intellect in itself, it is in such wise properly speculative, that it is perfected by habit, which is the grace of contemplation, otherwise called speculative science; but if we consider it as born to be extended to work, it is perfected by such habit as causes us to become good, and that is practical or moral science. But if, in a middle way, it be considered as born to be extended to affection, it is perfected by such habit as occupies a middle place between what is purely speculative, and the practical, which embraces both; and this habit is called wisdom, which is at the same time knowledge and affection. The grace of contemplation, therefore, is principally given that we may become good. Such is the knowledge delivered in this book. For this knowledge assists faith, and faith is so far in the intelligence, that in its own manner it is born to move the affections. For this knowledge Christus pro nobis mortuus est, and similar, unless man be a sinner and hardened move to love and devotion.”

John of Salisbury says, that “keeping the commandments of God is the most secure, and, indeed, the only way of making a progress in philosophy;” a judgment, truly, not calculated to extend his reputation as a philosopher in these days, when every Tyro reverses the sentence of David, and says in his heart, “I have understood more than the aged, because I have disregarded thy commandments.” However, not merely in a pious, but in a strict philosophic sense,

* De Sept. Grad. Vit. Spir. c. 74.

† Henric. Gand. Sum. tom. i. art. 8, Q. 111. f. 65.

‡ De Locis Theolog. Lib. xii. c. 2.

the wisdom of Israel's holy king was recognised by the clean of heart.

"*Mores perducunt ad intelligentiam*," says the profound Augustin,* "which truth, even the ancient sages had discerned, as may be seed in Plato and Cicero, who both show that virtue is the perfection of reason."† Frederick Schlegel remarks that, "clear abstract thought, separated from life, is now held to be the only right way of philosophy; nay, that it is identified with philosophy." "This clear and abstract thought, as it is called, suffers," he says, "no supposition to remain valid, and it supplies nothing, and it has no ground of foundation but itself: it goes forth alone, from itself, and has no peculiar beginning and no end; it has no limits, but it revolves eternally within its own magic circle."‡ Such was not the idea of philosophy in the scholastic ages, when the most profound men would, like John Picus of Mirandula, have continually on their tongues the saying of St. Francis, "*Tantum scit homo quantum operatur*."§ Theirs was a philosophy not of words and of abstract ideas, but of things and of life. "All men should not be philosophers," say some, but, continues St. Clement of Alexandria, "should not all men partake of life? What say you then? Do you not believe? How can you love God and your neighbour without being a philosopher, and how can you love yourself unless you love life?"|| The philosophy of Catholic schools consisted not in pompous phrases and beautiful discourses, but in humble answers and in beautiful deeds; so that it would have been well for many of the new learning, who excused them of wanting a true philosophy, if they could have thought and written as nobly as these men acted. Not as if in the Lyceum or in the portico, disputing with a Greek preceptor, but, in action, did the youth of Catholic nations learn wisdom.

So when John of Salisbury has spoken of the modesty of Christian youths, and their reverence for age, he exclaims, "what Athens, what school, what foreign academy shall I prefer to this domestic discipline? From them, indeed, proceeded Plato, yet I have known a man greatly inferior to Plato, excepting that he is a Christian, and I do not think it lawful to prefer even Plato to a Christian—I have known a man,

I say, who was always suffering from disease, and yet in the midst of pain always rejoicing, strengthened in the knowledge of God, despising the world, and embracing every cross presented to him by the hand of the Lord."*

The philosophy of the schoolmen, subtle and profound as were their debates, was not that of dialecticians, who would rather dispute acutely than live prudently; nor of physicians, who live in the air, or in the bowels of the earth, and are strangers, not citizens, in the society of men; but it was of men, who, by the discharge of the ordinary duties of their respective conditions, were to make their calling and election sure. This direction of the human energies effected every thing in the society of Catholic states, so that Pasquier can discern its traces even in the eloquence and practice of the bar. "The Roman orator," says he, "had to do with a people who fed themselves on words, and from the people they expected all their grandeur: their sole study was how to harangue in public; but as for us, we must in our pleading have more nerve and less flesh. If we were to allow ourselves the reins like the ancients, we should be laughed at for our pains. We do not profess the art of speaking like them, nor would their style be tolerated in our parliaments."†

"How often," exclaims Richard of St. Victor, "doth man know the way of truth, without walking in it, being drawn aside and enticed by his concupiscence. Such a man, indeed, has the day of knowledge, but not the cloud of refreshing grace; and some have night, but not the fire of illuminating grace."‡ "The shortest and most certain method of discerning truth," says Malebranche, "is to live as a true Christian—to follow exactly the precepts of eternal truth—to hear our faith rather than our reason; for it is by faith alone that God will lead us into that immense light of truth which will dissipate all our darkness for ever. They who trust in God will understand truth, and the faithful will acquiesce in his love." "Better is it," says the great Christian Platonist, Marsilius Ficinus, "to love than to scan eternal things—to judge them well is most difficult—to love them ill impossible; never can they be loved ill, provided they are fervently loved, for they can never be loved

* Tract. 18. in Joan. † De Finibus, Lib. iv.

‡ Philosophie der Sprache, 18.

§ In Vita ejus. || Pædagog Lib. iii. c. 11.

* De Nugis Curialium, Lib. viii. c. 8.

† Lettres de Pasquier, Liv. xi. 6.

‡ De Contemplatione, Lib. v. 15.

too much, yea, rather they can never be sufficiently loved. It is the contrary with temporal things; for it is better to judge than to love them.* To the same effect were all the instructions of John Picus of Mirandula: "see my Angelo," he said to Politian, "what insanity it is not to love God more than we can speak or know, while we are in the body, since, by loving, we make greater proficiency as regards ourselves, labour less, and obey him more. Yet we would rather always by knowledge never find what we seek, than by loving possess that which, without loving, must be sought in vain."†

So truly from the heart did this great philosopher utter these words, that according to the testimony of his nephew, John Francis, he valued more the most minute aspiration of any old man or old woman towards God, than all his own knowledge of divine and human things.‡ These illustrious lovers of wisdom had well meditated on the maxims of the saints, and had drunk deep of that living truth, which breathes throughout their writings. "Although, in human things," says St. Bonaventura, "it is necessary to understand before being moved, yet in the true and experimental knowledge of divine things, it is necessary first to perceive by love before understanding by the intelligence. For this is the general rule in mystic theology, that it is necessary first to have practice, and then theory; that is, the usage of exercise in the heart before the knowledge of the thing itself; for God is above all creatures, and can only be known by approximation; and since love alone makes the soul approximate to him, the more ardently a soul loves, the nearer it approximates to the fountain of light, and, consequently, the more it is illuminated with knowledge; therefore, we must love before we can understand."§ In conformity with these views was the whole philosophy of the ages of faith. One of its great characteristics is practicability. Nothing can be so easily reduced to action, and accommodated to all the diversified circumstances of human life. What, for instance, can be more designed for familiar use than the great principle of self-renunciation, of taking up the cross, of obedience, of love? To think is the great boast of modern times, but it would be well if we attended to what Catholic philo-

sophers observed on this head, "do you wish to think usefully?" asks Marsilius Ficinus, "then," replies he, "think upon as few things as possible. In exiguo cespite latet lepus. Patent ubique mala; in angustum redactum est quod bonum est.* The thinkers of the ages of faith had reduced the essential points of moral philosophy within a small compass, and had expressed them all in what they termed the Christian's alphabet. It was as follows:—"Ama nesciri. Benevolus omnibus. Custodi cor. Dilige solitudinem. Elige paupertatem. Fuge. Gratiarum age. Humilia te. Intentio pura. Charissimi qui premunt. Labore et dolore. Magnus qui minimus. Neminem spernas. Omne tempus Deo. Placetne Deo? Quid ad te? Revertere. Sobrius esto. Time Deum. Vende omnia. Ὑμνον cane cum Deo. Χριστός sit vita. Za, chæe, descende." If you will hear Novalis, no superficial thinker, I suppose, the spiritual life, thus taught, is philosophy, κατ' ἐξοχήν. Beyond the mark at which these men aimed there was no progress to be looked for. "Since," as St. Thomas says, "it is manifest that the goodness of the human will depends much more upon the eternal law than upon human reason, so that where human reason fails one must have recourse to the eternal reason."†

"Therefore," as Bonald remarks, "the name of modern philosophy is one of reprobation, for in morals every doctrine which is not as ancient as man, or as the gospel, is an error."‡ Another characteristic of the Catholic philosophy, arising indeed as a necessary consequence from those already noticed, was its clearness and communicability. Whatever may be said of the schoolmen, in their relation to physical science, within the important sphere of religion and morals, no one can accuse them of indistinctness of ideas; for, according to the order prescribed by Richard of St. Victor, those who passed to theoretics, had previously had the eye of their mind purified by ethics. Their language was explicit, not with oracular response obscure, such as ere the Lamb of God was slain, beguiled the credulous nations, but formed of terms precise, conveying unambiguous lore. As Savonarola observes, "never was the world presented with a doctrine so clear and communicable as the Catholic wisdom: all other systems

* Mar. Fic. Epist. Jacobo Bracciolino.

† In vita ejus. ‡ Id.

§ S. Bonaven. Mystica Theologia.

* Epist. Lib. i.

† Q. xix. art. 4.

‡ Legislat. Prim. i. 27.

are obscure, and scarcely comprehensible after long study, and always burdened with many perplexities; but, in the Catholic Church, persons of all age and condition, and of both sexes, have an immediate answer to give every one, who asks them concerning the points on which all other men have ever disputed, and do still dispute, and become so constant and immovable, that multitudes would rather suffer a thousand deaths than deny the least iota of what they have received.* Hence one of the most learned of the holy fathers says, "alike must philosophize, both slave and free man, man and woman."† Henry of Ghent expressly shows, that women and boys are quite competent and proper to have the science of theology expounded to them.‡

Francis Picus of Mirandula remarks, "that to the study of divine philosophy, and of the sacred letters, all the ancient theologians exhort men of every condition, and amongst our contemporaries, he adds, Pope Innocent and John Gerson, who say, that not merely those whose especial business it is to study theology as priests and clerks; but that all men of every rank and order, as far as they have opportunity, should so apply themselves."§ We observed in the Third Book what care had been expended to instil truth, by even material monuments, into the minds of the people in all Catholic states; for the wisdom of the school, like the powerful but unsystematic speculation of the earliest sages of Greece, was capable of being expressed and taught by inscriptions in the front of chapels, along the public way. It resembled in this capability the old gnostic, or sententiary philosophy of Thales, Anaximander, Pherecydes, and the others of that first period. One of St. Bonaventura's works is entitled *Breviloquii*. So that on beholding these symbolic holy images, paintings, and inscriptions placed on all sides, with the cross, one might, with peculiar justice, exclaim, "numquid non sapientia clamitat, et prudentia dat vocem suam? In summis excelsisque verticibus, supra viam, in mediis semitis, stans juxta portas civitatis, in ipsis foribus, loquitur dicens, O Viri, ad vos clamito, et vox mea ad filios hominum. Intelligite parvuli astutiam, et insipientes animadvertite."||

* *Triump. Crucis*, Lib. ii. 14.

† *S. Clem. Alex. Stromat.* Lib. iv. 1.

‡ *Hen. Gand.* tom. ii.

§ *De Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philosophiæ*, Lib. ii. cap. 1.

|| *Salom. c.* viii.

"In fact," as Bonald says, "while the law of the state promulgated its sentence in the tribunals, the moral or divine law was taught by religion, and inculcated every where—at the domestic hearth and on the public places, in cities and in the country, in temples and in camps. Each man, whatever might be his profession, 'found wisdom seated at his gate; it showed itself to man in all his paths;' and if it was not obeyed every where, it was at least no where contradicted.* No where either was it perverted by professed teachers of religion; for the race had not then sprung up, who turn revelation into a thing of riddles and conundrums, for men to exercise their wits withal, disguising plain and intelligible truth under the form of a silly paradox. The pulpits of the middle ages were not employed for announcing minute systematic arrangements of opinions, building up of paradoxes to be pulled down by explanations, elaborate proofs of mere truisms, when the conclusions are just as easily admitted as the premises, consolations of factitious griefs, solutions of imaginary difficulties, discoveries of new interpretations of texts, removal of fears, which no body ever felt, warning against dangers, which no body ever fell into, but they were used by apostolic teachers, who taught from them the duties of men, as Christians, as masters, as servants, as neighbours, as citizens—who unmasked the delusions of self-love, and vanity, and pride, and passion, which veil men's imperfections from themselves, and impede their progress in the paths of wisdom.

Again, the idea of philosophy, and the mode of popular education in ages of faith, differed, no doubt, greatly from that proposed at present; but intelligent observers have remarked, that this abundant external learning, on which the whole of modern philosophy and education are grounded, and in which alone they consist, weakens oftener and blunts the faculties of the mind, the elasticity of the intellectual life, all, in short, that is natural and cannot be learned; so that when men have obtained the office, or post, which was their object in view, in amassing all this learning, entering upon life as men, the majority, when they do not entirely throw aside their philosophy, merely vegetate with lame withered minds, devoid of all higher interests. In Catholic times it was otherwise; the

* *Legislat. Prim.* i. 213.

youth did not learn so much perhaps out of books, but neither did he forget so much, and the faculties of his mind remained fresher, more youthful, richer in experience, in sound manly understanding. He had a living interest in what he knew, and an ardent desire after that which he knew not; "his knowledge in general," as Huber says, "was of that kind which gives a lighter and fresher nourishment to the living members of a social state, than can be yielded by the modern stiff book learning, book philosophy, and sentimentality." Shakspeare drew from memory of Catholic manners, when he described "one bred among woods and mountains, and yet gentle; never school'd, and yet learned; full of noble device; of all sorts enchantingly beloved."

Hence, in ages of faith, most thinking men would have agreed with Stephen Pasquier, "in believing that there was never a greater philosopher in the world, nor more true than the voice of the people, which concurs on the same subject." Ventura says, "that in consequence, the rudest people in a Catholic country are more practically wise in all things relative to life, than the teachers themselves of other nations."* The common talk of the one, is wiser than the books of the others, and they speak wiser even than they may be always themselves aware of. St. Thomas, who drew such wisdom from the cross, lays it down as an axiom to guide all instructors in philosophy, that stability and clearness must be ever attended to. *Stabilitas, ut non deviant a veritate; claritas, ut non doceant cum obscuritate.*

We might apply a Thucydidean phrase to all these philosophers, and say *γνώμην δὲ ἐποίησαν*—they had fixed, decided, irreversible judgments; they were not men of vague, fugitive opinions. The Catholic philosophy, notwithstanding all its constellations, had not secular variations; whereas that which opposed it had periodical variations from the influence of each poor meteor that approached it in its eccentric path. Here, then, one perceives that great advantage to which I before alluded, as resulting to the intelligence from the habit of submitting to the voice of the Holy See—which was ordained to preserve the understanding of Christians from passing beyond the bounds of knowledge, to set at rest the questions of curious men, and to preserve the humble from

their seduction,—voice hereditary, with power to condemn every new error, and to determine every question respecting faith,* —"voice," which, as St. Bernard says, "cannot err, such being its prerogative,"† —voice, which in point of fact, has never been detected of error, for what is related in the Roman Breviary of St. Marcellus has been disproved by St. Augustin, has never acknowledged that it might err, has never been revoked,‡—voice of divine power, ordained for the confirmation of the brethren, which would tend to the destruction, and not to the safety of the Church, if it had not been infallible. Let a modern and illustrious disciple, who had been misled by a genius which he over highly prized, attest its efficacy as regarding himself.

"I came to understand," says Lacordaire, "how I had been subdued in attempting to contend with an intelligence superior to mine. There must be in the world a power, which can sustain inferior minds against the strong, and which can deliver them from the most terrible of all oppressions, that of the intelligence. This power came to my assistance; I did not deliver myself, but it delivered me. On arriving at Rome, I knelt at the tomb of the holy apostles, Peter and Paul, and besought God, saying, 'Lord, I begin to feel my weakness, error and truth equally escape from me; have pity on thy servant, hear the prayer of the poor.' I know not the day or the hour, but I have seen what I had not seen. I left Rome free and victorious, having learned by my own experience that the Church is the liberator of the human mind; and, as from the liberty of intelligence flow necessarily all other liberties, I perceived in their true light the questions which this day divide the world."§ What confidence in these words, and yet what humility! The secret had been long ago explained by the schoolmen. "Behold," says Richard of St. Victor, "how charity makes man presume beyond man, by making him presume in God."|| With respect to the philosophical instruction of the schools, we have already observed how false is the supposition that it was occupied exclusively with trivial debates and unmeaning subtilities. It remains to

* S. Thom. N. 2. q. 1. ar. 10.

† Epist. ad Inn. ii. 190 in Præf.

‡ Greg. xvi. Il Trionfo della S. Sede, cap. 24.

§ Considérations sur le Syst. Philos. de M. de la Mennais.

|| De Grad. Viol. Charitatis.

* De Methodo Philosophandi.

show that obscurity was always regarded as its abuse and its defect, while its general object was to impart clear and definite conceptions of truth. Men talk now of the night of the dark ages, but it is not by reference to the scholastic philosophers, that they can substantiate the charge; for in the serene splendour of eternal light these men walked as had the ancient fathers, and the just have always had immortal light sprung from the father of the light of saints. The proud and restless spirits, on the contrary, have been in the pain of outward darkness in times past as well as now.

If the scholastic ages must be designated as night, it was one like that of which the Church so grandly sings at the opening of her Paschal solemnities—the night which purged the darkness of sins by the illumination of the column—the night which restored to grace and associated with sanctity those throughout the universal world, who believed in Christ—the night of which it is written, *et nox sicut dies illuminabitur*—the night whose holiness put wickedness to flight, washed out sins, restored innocence to the fallen, joy to mourners, dispelled hatred, produced concord, and subdued empires; truly blessed night, in which earthly with celestial, human with divine things were joined. So far from obscurity being characteristic of the philosophy of the ages of faith, we might securely affirm that it is peculiarly distinguished from that of later times, by its aversion to whatever is confused and subversive of clear distinct conceptions.

A German philosopher remarks, “the instructive character which belongs to all the writings of Hugo of St. Victor, which merited for him the title of Didascalus, and also the purity, simplicity, and uprightness, which ever directed him to move straight forward, and say what he thought, without any of that endless reflecting self-consciousness, which, with coldness and vanity, kills in the bud so much that is noble and fair.”* He concludes his critical examination of his works, by citing Oudin, who says, “that when a sound criticism has been exercised in giving a new edition, *velut os Domini Hugo Victorinus erit*.” Again, of St. Bonaventura, Trithemius says that, “he is profound not verbose, subtle not curious, learned not vain.” But let us hear the scholastics speak expressly on this point.

* Liebner Hugo von S. Vict. und die Theol. Richtungen seiner Zeit. 33.

On the words of Seneca, “*Odibilis nihil est subtilitate ubi est sola subtilitas*,” Peter Chanter, the celebrated theologian of the twelfth century, comments, saying, “Nothing is so adverse to utility as too much subtility. Do not move and scatter dust, lest by so doing the eyes of thy mind be involved and obscured, or even quite darkened.”*

“*Quicunque auctor scientiarum humanarum*,” says Duns Scotus, “quanto acutior intellectu tanto plus vitat superfluitatem in tradendo.”†

Against the abuse of philosophy none were more strenuous than those who loved and pursued it with the greatest success, as Pope Gregory IX., who admonished the professors of Paris not to prefer through vanity philosophy to their science, which alone has the true spirit of life; to beware of error, and not to wish to seem learned rather than to be of God learned, not to return from heavenly to the low and dark elements of the world and of nature, which served man only in his childhood; and reminding them that they can only become more and more thirsty by drinking out of the fountains which are not those of grace.‡

For advance in philosophy Catholics, in all ages, looked to that Divine Master whose property it is, as the prophetic voice proclaimed, to teach useful things. *Ego Dominus Deus tuus, docens te utilia*;§ and, therefore, it has ever been the aim of sophists to persuade the world that the church had no science which deserved the name of philosophy.

Albert the Great denounces “the study of those subtle books with which the devil leads the minds of men from purely and simply adhering to God.”|| What would he have said to the philosophic literature of the northern nations in modern times? What would the scholastics have thought of these men, who have no other God, as the ancient poet would say, but the tongue and chaos? each of whom passes his days in nothing else but sophisticating and introducing new ideas, *ἀλλ' αἰεὶ καὶ ἰδέας εἰσφέρων σοφίζομαι*? What would the Angelic Doctor have concluded from hearing these revolting and insane paradoxes left to the world as their table-talk, which are deemed to be so profound because most shocking and horrible to the common

• In Lib. de Verbo Abbreviato, c. 3.

† Duns Scot. in Lib. Sent. Prolog. q. 11.

‡ Regist. Greg. IX. year 11. § Is. 48.

|| Albert Mag. de Adhærendo Deo, cap. 4.

sense of men?—assertions false, or little else but dreams, conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm? At the least, I think, he would class many books of great celebrity at present with the Talmud, as being compositions in which one can learn little but the art of saying nothing in a multitude of words. It is a remark which occurs in Plato's Republic, as the result of experience, "that the greatest number of men who pursue philosophy, who do not abandon it in youth, but continue to pursue it long after, become altogether most strange and whimsical persons—*ἀλλοκότους*." And this is only another instance of his talent of observation; for that the wisdom which men elicit from their own independent thoughts, unrestrained and disdainful of external instruction, frequently leads to ridiculous results, is a fact which can be witnessed without going back to heathen times; since the most absurd and truly whimsical sentences that can be found in the whole range of pagan literature may be matched, perhaps, without any very great difficulty from the pages of writers in modern times, who profess to aid reflection.

Priam says, that when Ulysses was a guest in his house, he spoke few words, but clear:—

*Παῖρα μὲν, ἀλλὰ μάλα λεγίως· ἐπεὶ οὐ πολὺμυθος οὐδ' ἀφαιμαρτοεπής.**

Such a testimony at present would not be thought to indicate a philosophic traveller, but it would admirably express the effects of Catholic discipline. It is easy, however, to understand why men who love to indulge their genius in an interminable flow of words should detest the scholastic philosophy which includes the gift of Empedocles to stop the wind: men who seem to wish that it should be difficult to know what they think or what they wish must needs consider its logic as vulgarity. How many writers of this kind now launch forth upon a sea of vague unintelligible abstractions, where there is no bottom or anchorage. One can see nothing fixed or solid in their discourses. "*Cælum undique et undique pontus*." If you do not find the cross and blessed names interwoven with their compositions, they have deities of their own, like Euripides, the air and volubility of tongue.

S. Clemens says, that Alexander of

Macedon, desiring to select the best of the Indian gymnosophists, chose from them ten who seemed to be the wisest, and who spoke the shortest words, *καὶ βραχυλογώτατους*.^{*} That would not be the criterion at present. The men who are now most conspicuous in opposition to the Catholic philosophy resemble rather those followers of Heraclitus, or the disciples of Ephesus, whom Theodorus describes to Socrates. "These men," saith he, "seem impelled to writing by a certain frantic impulse, but you can no more argue with them than with the frantic; for to await reasoning and interrogation, and peaceably to answer in their turns, and to speak, is found in them less than nothing, or, rather, this nothing is what gets the better in them, on account of their never possessing the least tranquillity. If you advance any thing against them, they shoot out enigmatical shadows of sentences as if drawing them from a quiver; and if you seek to seize the argument, and to make out what they have said, they will strike you with another, newly changed in expression, so that you will never be able to terminate any thing with any one of them. Nay, they never come to agreement even with each other; but, above all things, they take care to guard against there being suffered any thing fixed or immovable either in their discourse or in their souls; thinking, as I suppose, that this is the part of one who makes tranquillity and rest; and against this they wage war with all their might, endeavouring to cast it from them." "Perchance, O Theodorus!" replies Socrates, "you have seen these men contending, but never while at peace; for they are not your companions, but I suppose they converse differently with their own disciples." "What disciples?" exclaims Theodorus; "since no one of them will learn as a disciple from another, but they grow up of themselves, each enthusiastically uttering whatever chance may have taught him, and each thinking that the others know nothing."[†] "Plato, genuine prophet and anticipator as he was of the Protestant Christian era!" says Mr. Coleridge. Be it so; only let us add, also, painter and historian.

Truly, with these philosophers of the misty school, who are more fine writers than deep thinkers, who give empty words, sound without mind, the clearest and most certain things are made to assume the

* Il. iii. 214.

* Strom. vi. 4.

† Plato Theætetus.

character of a speculation. What will they do with hidden and obscure things, who endeavour to take away light? If St. Thomas had heard one of our great adepts in philosophy, I think he would have been content to answer him from the poet, and say, "I am not wiser than the Minerva of Æschylus, who says, she will learn if one shall choose to deliver a clear discourse *ἐμφανῆ λόγον*."*

Richard of St. Victor complains that the poverty of human language compels us often to vary the signification of words: so far was he from wishing to study obscurity. Moreover, the Catholic philosophy never suffered men to rest their opinions upon any supposed personal illumination, independent or different from that grace which is equally offered to all. Whereas it is notorious how many eminent professors of modern philosophy are associated with the idea of a continual appeal to feelings and communications, of which no one but themselves can form any notion. This mode of defending unintelligible systems would not agree even with the modesty of the ancient sage, who refrains from speaking of the sign from the Deity which he supposed himself to have received; adding, "It is not worth while to speak of what occurs to myself, for this has been vouchsafed to but few persons, or perhaps to no one else."†

St. Augustin interprets the ten lepers in the gospel to be "those who, not having the science of true faith, profess various doctrines of error; for they do not hide their ignorance, but bring it forward to light, as if it were the highest knowledge and show it with boasting speech."‡ Much of that literature entitled philosophic opposed to faith, would be rejected by the father of the scholastics, as being not only the doctrines of error, but also as tending to involve the ideas of mankind in a confusion injurious to the light of the gospel. They could never be persuaded that the Almighty had left his creatures to be guided to truth by men who could not perhaps understand the meaning of their own sentences a year after they had written them. In ages of faith there was no such indistinctness in the intellectual world, but it was as on that first day when God divided the light from the darkness and imposed names on both: men could discern the light from the darkness. "Neither,"

says Lewis of Grenada, "ought we with vain labour to construct for ourselves a tower of Babel, in order to escape the flood of waters, when now by the wood of the cross the church proposes a means of sure salvation to us all." Men knew that there was more danger than profit in such philosophy. As St. Augustin says, "*Verba philosophorum excludit simplicitas Piscatorum*." Therefore, not from speculators but from God, not in secular lyceums but in churches, not in inquiries and argumentation but in humble and assiduous prayer, did they seek for an increase of wisdom. As St. Ambrose says, "Not by dialectics did it please God to save his people; the kingdom of God is in the simplicity of faith, not in contentions of speech." In fact, we may apply to the state of philosophy in ages of faith, as contrasted with its present condition, what St. Augustin says of Greece in the time of Thales and the seven wise men: "*Nondum effluerat ac pullulaverat philosophorum subtilis et acuta loquacitas*."§ For though the writings of the schoolmen are voluminous, and their ratiocination unwearied and acute, the grand points of their philosophy, and all that gave it real importance in their own estimation, were expressed by them in as few and as plain words as possible. The rest was an exercise of leisure, a recreation. Their essential doctrines, like the wisdom of the ancient philosophy, were, as we have already observed, all conveyed in short sentences—*ρήματα βραχεία ἀξιωματώμενα ἐκάστω εἰρημένα*.† Moreover every thing was determined with them, even to the forms of expression; so that it was impossible to be misled by the terms they employed. St. Augustin says, "The philosophers use words as they choose, nor do they fear to offend religious ears; but for us, it is necessary to follow a certain rule in speaking, lest the license of words should beget an impious opinion concerning the things which they signify."‡ Accordingly, we find Richard of St. Victor stopping himself on one occasion, and saying, "But, lest our words should seem to savour of human philosophy, or to depart from the plain and simple tenor of Catholic doctrine, it will be better to say as follows,"§ and Guibert de Nogent, explaining the difference of his manner in historic and philosophic composition by

* Eumenid. 420. † Plato de Repub. Lib. vi.
‡ Hom. Lib. ii. Quæst. Evang. c. 40.

* De Civ. Dei, xviii. 24.

† Plato, Protag.

‡ De Civit. Dei, Lib. x. 23.

§ De Contemplatione, p. i. Lib. i. c. 5.

the necessity of adhering to the same rule, saying, "In my history I have adopted a very different style from that of my expositions on Genesis; for a history may be crowned with more elaborate eloquence, but we must treat the mysteries of sacred things not with a poetic loquacity, but with ecclesiastical simplicity."*

The immense intellectual advantage which resulted from this precision of the school has not been sufficiently remarked. The body needs the shelter of a thousand artificial limits from the bleak desert air of the wide earth, and so does the mind need shelter amidst the trackless wastes of speculation; it must have barriers erected for it, and even narrow close divisions, within which it can associate with others, to give it warmth and assistance, to protect it from being frozen or utterly dissipated and lost in wilds of abstraction.

We may observe, here, that in consequence of the same discipline, from the men themselves, as well as from their writings, all whimsical eccentricity was removed. Their whole character was complete, and in unison; it showed nothing singular, nothing extravagant, but the sweet and beautiful proportions of sound and perfect nature. Witness Hugo of St. Victor—of vast capacity, quick intelligence, tenacious memory, eloquent tongue, graceful speech, and persuasive manner; effective in work, gracious in conversation, the most gentle and humane of men.

That some of the scholastic philosophers may have exercised their subtlety in vain and frivolous disquisitions, is a fact which no one denies. Sufficient pains are taken to remind us of it; for "the wise man's folly is anatomized even by the squandering glances of the fool;" but that they were never left without a warning voice from their contemporaries, and that they needed not the light of modern times to discern the danger and absurdity of such studies, is a fact no less true; in proof of which might be produced innumerable passages of which modern writers leave their readers in ignorance. On philosophic grounds they were admonished. "Neither does the genius of man deserve approbation," says Hugo of St. Victor, "for applying pertinaciously to things which are difficult, but rather for discerning prudently those things which are to be known."† But still more on religious grounds was the

danger denounced. "The ecclesiastical discipline," says St. Jerome, "if it even admitted these subtleties, ought to disguise and avoid them, as it does not speak to a few disciples in the idle schools of philosophers, but to the universal race of men."*

When the spirit of controversy enticed the masters of the school into questions foreign from faith and Christian morals, into researches of mere curiosity, frivolous hypotheses, or disputes of words, the whole episcopal order and the brightest luminaries of the school came forward to announce the danger.† The consequences, indeed, had been clearly seen in Roscelin of Compiègne, Gilbert de la Porée, Peter Abailard, and Amauri de Bene. Then, above all, was the voice of the Holy See heard.

Pope Gregory IX. wrote to the doctors of Paris in these terms:—"We order and enjoin you rigorously to teach pure theology, without any mixture of worldly science—not to alter the word of God by the vain imaginations of philosophers—to hold yourselves within the bounds placed by the fathers—to fill the minds of your hearers with the knowledge of ecclesiastical truths—and to make them draw from the fountains of the Saviour." The abuse against which this was directed had been feelingly lamented by holy men in all ages, for the pride of reason is of all ages.

Let us hear Peter the Venerable, or Henricus de Palma:—"The ways of Sion lament, because there is no one who goes to the solemnity; and these words of the prophet may be used in reference to the captivity of souls, and to the ways which lead to God, and to the spiritual Jerusalem; which ways may be said to lament because there is no one to follow them; while multitudes, casting off the pursuit of true wisdom, entangle themselves with useless curiosities; and many men of famous reputation, omitting the right worship of the Creator, serve manufactured idols—that is to say, instead of pursuing true interior wisdom, by which God alone is adored, they fill their minds with different sciences, and fabricated inventions of multitudinous arguments, as if with certain idols; and with these their mind is so possessed, that true wisdom can find no place in them. But God did not create the soul to this end, that against its own generosity it should be filled with a multitude of sheep-skins, but that it might be

* Guibert de Novigent. *Epist. ad Lisiard. Sues. sionens. Episcop. Gesta Dei per Francos.*

† De Sacram. Lib. i. p. vi. c. 2.

* *Epist. xxxi.*

† Berthier, *Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles XII. XIII. et XIV.*

the seat of wisdom, and that the pacific King of the supernal city, the highest God, might reside in it; for this wisdom, which is called mystical theology, is taught by St. Paul the Apostle; and it is identical with the extension of the love of God, and it incomparably excels the science of all creatures as far as the east is from the west; for the sciences of the world doctors teach, but this is taught by God immediately, and not by any mortal man: this by divine illuminations and distillations is written in the heart, but that is inscribed on the skin with a quill; and this says sufficit, for the soul finds rest in the fountain of goodness and beatitude, but the other never says it is enough; for there is no end to the labours of vanity. Therefore, leaving human wisdom, and the useless curiosity of science, and the bonds of arguments and opinions, the religious soul, by the ascent of love, mounts with desire to the fountain of all things in which alone it can find truth; and as God alone can teach this, it follows that any layman whatever in the school of God may receive this wisdom, which no philosopher and no secular master could ever impart to him.*

"It is permitted us in our republic," as Clemens Alexandrinus saith, "to philosophize without a knowledge of letters, whether we be barbarians or Greeks, though we be slaves, old men, boys, or women; for we are all of the same nature, and capable of the same virtue,"† and the church, in the Prose of Pentecost, as if with an especial view to remind us of this, invoking the Holy Spirit, teaches that the father of the poor is the light of hearts. The instruction of the poor and ignorant was the holiest office of those who spoke wisdom among the perfect. "The intelligence of truth," says Richard of St. Victor, "we receive for our own profit, but the doctrine of truth for the advantage of others."‡

It is this communion with persons who have no pretensions to the character of extraordinary learning and ability, that renders the Catholic philosophy so despicable in the eyes of many. A society which is ready to impart to peasants and domestics the same instruction as to philosophers, can have no charms for the numerous class of men endowed with the sophistic character. O what poor wretches their fellow-creatures seem to them, in their commonplaceness,

who yet all, as the patient children and drudges of mother earth, are wiser and better than they! To win their hearts there must be a system which persons in the ordinary walks of life have no time to learn, which minds without the habit of long study cannot comprehend, a phraseology, too, which none can use but those who have made themselves familiar with the most abstruse metaphysicians. The delightful simplicity of truth, which had such charms for the philosophers of the middle ages, provokes the suspicions or disdain of all such men; and they reject the Catholic rule precisely because it fulfils the divine prophecy, that a fool should not err therein. It cannot be, they seem to think, that God should employ such a plain and obvious method for deciding controversies and preserving unity as authority. Of what avail, then, would be all their investigations and knowledge of languages, and cultivation, of their genius? If it were so, their own servant, yea, the Irish peasant, would be as competent to find truth as themselves. "The rule of the church is too uniform," they say: "it can be applied by men of insufficient capacity, as well as by the skilful."* With such a rule the church can never please them; and so they continue to reject every idea but what is misty and intricate; while men of profound Catholic views can have no chance of obtaining a hearing, unless they come before them in the capacity of buffoons, to hazard the expression of their conviction as a jest. Like Cinesias, they take their exordium from the clouds; for they instinctively know, like him, that their whole art hangs from them. Their words are all aerial, dark as night, and buoyant as the vapour of the sky; so that they seem to move with every wind.† It is the same disposition which renders them, in questions of history, resolute in rejecting facts, in order to substitute some speculation, which is the farthest possible removed from every thing plain and obvious. Thus they affirm that the religious revolution in England was brought about by causes quite foreign from any of those usually assigned for it; and instead of hearing the evidence of historians respecting Henry's filthy doings, and what the nobles of his bastard daughter worked with their adulterate money on the Thames, they invite their readers to contemplate the beauty of some pure abstraction, or "the

* *Mystica Theologia* Prolog.

† *Stromat. Lib. iv. c. 8.*

‡ *De Erudit. Hom. Inter. Lib. i. p. i. 19.*

* *Lettres à un Berlinois, par M. Lermnier.*

† *Aves, 1385.*

blessed security which resulted from the circumstance that self-willed monarchs and politicians moved the secret wires of the spiritual machine." "The apparent subordination of doctrine to politics in our Reformation," says a recent author, "was a manifest token that a divine hand was at work in it." Any thing tangible in the sphere of religion seems alike repugnant to them; so that they will have the rock on which the church was built to have been not Peter, but the faith of Peter, or the confession of Peter; or, if it were Peter, the privilege, they say, was not to pass to his successors: in such haste are they to dissolve what they cannot deny existed. The universal consent of ages past to the sanctity of canonized men is precisely a motive to induce them to call it in question; and they will rather take the side of those who persecuted them, and envy Cardan for having written a panegyric upon Nero. Indeed, after reading some of their writings, one can hardly conceive that they speak their real sentiments; but it would seem as if they disputed merely in order to exercise their ingenuity with the difficulty of the matter—like Polycrates, when he praised Busiris and Clytemnestra, and made a discourse against Socrates. Yet are there not wanting philosophers, at present, to show, independent of the error in religion, the folly as well as ingratitude of such views. "A criterion of true philosophy," says Novalis, "is communicability: it must be a thing that can be communicated.* Even in the order of the sciences the most important truths are not those involved in greatest obscurity." The same author remarks, "that the highest and purest mathematics is the commonest and most intelligible. Elementary geometry is higher than the more advanced geometry. The more difficult and intricate a knowledge becomes, so much the more is it delusive, impure, and mixed."† "An intricate terminology," says Frederick Schlegel, "and a complete unintelligibility, are the constant attendants and peculiar signs of the false philosophy which supposes that it can find the treasures of truth and real knowledge in an ever wider separation between consciousness and the faculty of thought, and in an ever higher and more naked abstraction. But as often as men seek to raise up a real building of true knowledge by means of this clear abstraction, as it is called, this empty thought separated from life and from all living reality,

they repeat again the old history of the tower of Babel and of the confusion of tongues. Every new system of art is now a new cutting off and addition to that original confusion of languages. Every one of these builders of endless error begins by throwing down what had been built by his predecessors; and while he grounds the imaginary tower of his own private knowledge upon the empty space which he has been clearing away, he firmly resolves to build still higher than any one has ever done before. But no one understands the other, any more than himself; so that this new confusion of ideas becomes ever more and more intricate and dark, till at last nothing is left but some incomprehensible heaps of broken thoughts, which are what they always were, only some dead stones, some unintelligible abstractions. A more living philosophy can never choose and follow this way of abstraction; it proceeds from life, and from the feelings of life, and from consciousness.* Now clearly such was the Catholic philosophy, felt by the people, explained and confirmed by the scholastics. What author was ever more remarkable for a clear comprehensiveness, for admirable good sense, for unerring soundness of judgment, than St. Thomas? Even modern writers, who object to what they term the scholastic rind, affirm that, if his thoughts were expressed in another form, he would be the most popular of all writers; "he is," they add, "so eminent for truth and justice."† They cannot avoid regarding him as a man of vigorous, practical understanding, disdaining any rhetorical arts beyond what sufficed for expressing plain sense in clear words. Who more averse to indistinctness?

How often might one address the Angel of the school in the words of Adam, to the Angel of Paradise; "How fully hast thou satisfied me, freed from intricacies, taught to live—

"The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life: from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us: unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts and motions
vain."

But if the philosophy of the clean of heart, beholding God, was thus delivered from the clouds of obscurity which enshroud the mind unpurified, if it was free and common for all, even as broad and liberal as the

* Schriften. ii.

† Id. 172.

* Philosophie der Sprache. 20.

† Michelit.

blessed air and light of heaven, it was not, therefore, without glorious colours and refractions, or void of those deep, ineffable mysteries which give rest, by exciting love and wonder, to the intelligence of man.

"What is this sweet voice which sounds in my ears?" exclaims the youth, after the senior has spoken in the dialogue by the blessed Denis the Carthusian; and such words are the natural expression of a mind that hears, for the first time, the language of Catholic philosophy, conveying heavenly truths to man in tones of love. "Beautiful, indeed, are the words and promises which you propose to us," used to be the reply of the heathens to the holy missionaries of the middle ages, as Venerable Bede testifies.* To them a voice arose, solemn and sweet as when low winds attune the midnight pines: in fact they brought to them what that great Catholic philosopher Marsilius Ficinus terms "a divine music, namely, a concord of thoughts, words, and actions.—*Divina musica est rectus cogitationum, verborum actionumque concentus.*"† Such was the philosophy of the clean of heart; the result of whose kind and gentle words, accompanied with joyous semblance, was to leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies.

"What ought to be done?" asks Plato, after showing that the studies of young men are pursued with a view to profit, and that in later life they despise all philosophy—"The very reverse of what prevails," is the reply. "For while young, and even in first youth, they should apply to a philosophy accordant with youth, *φιλοσοφίαν μερικιῶδη*, exercising their bodies while they are in flower, that they may possess wherewithal to minister to philosophy: but as they advance in age, and their soul comes to perfection, they ought to cultivate the exercises which pertain to the soul; but when strength fails, and they are no longer capable of exertion, they should be turned out loose like the animals that graze round the temples."‡ From this passage one might infer that Plato would have found his ideal of philosophic culture realized in the middle ages, and diametrically opposed in the later schools, which produced young men without youth, and old men without dignity. The ancient poet represents an aged, avaricious father laughing at his son for having anti-

quated notions. Youth and ancient sentiments seemed associated in his mind, saying "*ὄχι παιδάριον εἰ καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαῖα.*"* So it was in ages of faith. The boy was not then taught to forget his nature, and consigned over to those frigid pursuits, which contract the mind; but he was initiated in the ancient and holy mysteries of that love which expands the heart and illuminates the intelligence. By solemn vision, and bright, holy offices, his infancy was nurtured. Every sight and sound, from the beauteous choir, sent to his heart its choicest impulses. The fountains of divine philosophy fled not his thirsting lips: and all of great, or good, or lovely, which the sacred past in truth or symbol consecrates, he felt and knew. Nor did the studies of mature age efface these early impressions. As the love of poetry was not superseded by a belief in allegory, which only began in the fifteenth century, when it was absurdly used to interpret the *Æneid* and the *Divina Commedia*,† so the love of truth was not confounded with a desire of abstract knowledge. Positive theology itself was concerned with the beautiful, and imparted to man a perception of many harmonies in the whole scheme of our redemption, which filled the soul with exquisite delight: "There are also many other things," says St. Anselm, "which, when studiously considered, display a certain ineffable beauty in the manner of procuring our redemption."‡ This Dante felt, and, in the seventh song of *Paradise*, he introduces Beatrice solving his doubts, and quenching his thirst with drops of sweetness. "Nor ought," she says of this mystery, "so vast or so magnificent, either for him who gave or who received, between the last night and the primal day, was or can be." Delight was sure to flow from every study in connexion with theology, for it was with wisdom, in general, as in the human body, of which you know not whether each part was created for the sake of use, or for that of beauty. "Certe enim," adds St. Augustine, "*nihil creatum videmus in corpore utilitatis causa quod non habeat etiam decoris locum.*"§

"Philosophy sounds like poetry," says Novalis. One can easily understand such an impression, after sitting for the first time in Catholic schools: but what does the voice which succeeded it in nations, directed by the new religious guides, sound like? At least there is no great danger of the

* Bede Ven. an. i. 25.

† Epist. Lib. i.

‡ De Repub. Lib. vi.

• Nubes, 767.

† Heeren Gesch. der Class. lit. im Mittelalter, ii. 325.

‡ Cur Deus Homo, Lib. i. 3.

§ De Civ. Dei, Lib. xxii. 24.

young mistaking it for a source of musical delight: indeed, if the thoughts of such men had grown harmonious, the world might have shortly looked for discord in the spheres. In effect, as this philosopher observes, "All evil is isolated and isolatizing: it is the principle of separation, contradiction, disorder—of all prosaic dullness, frigidity, and gloom. Falsehood, in particular, is confined and monotonous, cold and declamatory; while truth is broad, and infinitely diversified, inflamed, possessed of endless powers of assimilation, and, at the same time, mystical and unobtrusive.

The tendency of the public mind, where faith has perished, is towards sameness and dissension, whereas, in the middle ages, it was towards variety and union; of which a type might be seen in that symbolic branch of fire, used in the celebration of the paschal solemnities, which, as the church sings, although divided into parts, yet knows no diminution of light. In order to heal jealousies and lull contention, the best remedy, proposed by our wise men, is to abolish all the institutions and forms which Catholicity produced, in order that there should be no diversity discoverable on any side; whereas, under the influence of that philosophy, which is only another word for the Spirit of God, men knew how to establish and perpetuate variety by love; and instead of acts of uniformity we find only charters of foundation.

Philosophy was then in thought, what poetry was in feeling. Religious learning was scientific poetry: in short, most of what Novalis delivers as a speculation was then realized; as we may still witness in those dulcet lays, those philosophic epistles, those religious histories, those profound treatises, "which, as long as of our faith the fervour does not fade, shall make its love the very ink that traced them." Indeed, he remarks this himself: "The general expressions of the scholastic philosophy," saith he, "have a great resemblance to numbers; hence their mystic usage, their personification, their musical charm, their infinite combinations. All realities created out of nothing, such as numbers, and abstract expressions, have a marvellous relationship to things of another world, to an infinite series of strange combinations and relations, as if it were to a poetic, mathematical, and abstract world."* It is often a subject of surprise, that almost every eminent man of those ages should have been denominated, as was Baptist the

Mantuan, a poet, a philosopher, and theologian; and this might lead us to reflect upon the divine virtue of that wisdom which, in such multitudinous excellence, is imparted to the clean of heart.

The Catholic religion makes men naturally unimaginative think and do what poets utter in divinest strains. All that are with Peter's chair instinctively promote the charms of life, for by their very principles they are bound to protect them. I have often wondered to hear of long grown-up, dull, prosaic persons, resisting unfeeling sophists for a cause that seemed one of children, of youthful fancy—a cause of flowers and of poetry—a cause of the sweet wild pleasures, that hold the innocent fresh heart in a maze of delicious enchantment. How came they to feel an interest in it? the young will at times naturally ask: the fact is, that simple obedience compels them to act thus; so true is it, that children instinctively know more of God, than world-worn men. There is reality in the things which delight the young, in so much that the savages, who would take them away, would, with the same brutal violence and callous insensibility, strip the church of what essentially belongs to her: they would, with the same false cunning, cavil at her doctrine. Such is the secret harmony which must prevail—the mystic law, which cannot be reversed. Nothing can prevent the defence of truth, from being also the defence of poesy—the apology of faith, from being also the apology of the young.

All these countless and indefinite aspirations of the heart, which pass under the name of sentiment, these fair, and glorious, and solemn forms which float before the imagination in the grandest moments, these wreaths of flowers, these mossy cells, these forest depths, this indistinct delicious music of the inmost soul—all are placed under the safeguard of religion, and must be defended with authority; so that, when the barbarian race tries to rob us of them, we have only to turn our eyes to the supreme pontiff, and cry, like the suppliants of yore, Roma, Roma!

We had occasion to remark, in the Fifth Book, in what a deep and wondrous manner the ritual of the Catholic Church harmonized with our whole nature. In these ceremonies there was to be found, besides the theological sense, much aspersions of philosophy: they were, in fact, truths embodied, and so presented, in substantial form, to the understanding. In many parts of it, you can

* *Schriften*, ii. 171.

mark some cunning artifice, to excite and kindle the sentiments of our poor humanity, as when the pillow of the dead man is placed upon his coffin, during the mass of burial: so that the feelings which, in the modern society, are often exclusively suffered to develop themselves through the infected and pestiferous medium of a novel, were, under the Catholic influence, cultivated and expressed through the pure, and noble, and sanctifying forms of religious worship. This was the result of a conviction which deep reflection has imparted to later philosophers, that "it is sentiment which puts the fire as it were to our ideas, and draws us out from the aridity of abstraction, that reason produces but a weak will, often at the mercy of the least obstacle, and that reason must sometimes be converted into a passion to become active."*

According to the school, the use of the imagination extends to the highest and most spiritual inspirations of man. "Without doubt," says Richard of St. Victor, "the sense of the flesh precedes the sense of the heart in knowing things; because, unless the mind first should take sensible things by the corporeal sense, it would never find what it could think respecting them. But perhaps it is not wonderful if the bodily sense should lead the sense of the heart to a place whither itself can never come: but it is strange, in what manner it should lead it thither, when it cannot ascend itself. The corporeal sense does not take incorporeal things, to which nevertheless, without its guidance by the hand, reason doth not ascend. Certes, if man had not sinned, in the knowledge of things, the exterior sense would assist the interior; for who denies that Adam received Eve in order to be his assistant? But it is one thing to have a companion, and another a guide of one's journey. And since Eve drew away her husband, against the counsel or precept of God, to follow her counsel, Adam, as a punishment of his prevarication, is so weakened, that now he is obliged of necessity to follow her. Nevertheless, from the guidance of his assistant, not only he need not be confounded, but he may also glory, when, by that intervention, the use of corporeal similitudes leads him to the contemplation of things invisible."†

The philosophy of the clean of heart contained the secret of sanctifying passion,

of sanctifying all the countless unutterable affections and desires that are incident to the human mind. It showed how little reason had sense to fear the Creator, who made the earth and its creatures so beautiful to the senses—how little cause there was for distrust, in loving whatever was his workmanship, such as their natural loveliness and innocence, when that exquisite grace of form and colours had been so evidently contrived by his intelligence, and imparted by his hand. In another way too did scholastic science come to the aid of the devout mind, when perplexed with the consideration of the two-fold tendencies of flesh and spirit; for in its moments of discouragement, when distrust arose, and a scientific doubt suggested that the very rapture which it was enjoying might, after all, be only a deception of the senses, and darkness of the flesh, reason was brought to the rescue, and, from that moment, the victory to the clean of heart was complete: for reason herself, when enlightened by faith, assured them that the extasy was not the less divine and spiritual because the senses had been instrumental in exciting it. Such an employment of their power was according to the ordinance of God, and subservient to the angelic ministry which watched over it. "Who is that queen of the south," asks Richard of St. Victor, "who comes to hear the wisdom of Solomon—that inhabitant of the warm regions inflamed with a desire of truth? Who, I say, is that queen, but a holy soul, valiantly presiding over the senses and appetites of the flesh, over the thoughts and affections of the mind, glowing with love of the highest King and ardent with a longing to behold him."*

"It must be laid down," says the Angel of the School, "that the use of reason requires a due use of the imagination and of the other sensitive faculties, which are exercised by a corporeal organ;"† and again, "those in whom the imaginative, cogitative, and recollective power is best disposed, are the best disposed for intelligence;"‡ a truth which we may verify by every day's experience, for these unimaginative persons, such inveterate scorners of fancy, while so quick and sure to act from passion, seem always incapable of acting from an idea; they are creatures of blind habit, in the slavery of which ends their pure light of reason.

With these views of the Catholic school

* Alibert, *Physiologie des Passions*, tom. 1.

† Ric. S. Vict. de *Contemplatione*, pass. ii. c. 17.

* De *Contemplat.* i. v. c. 12.

† S. Thom. 1. q. xxxiii. art. 3.

‡ 1. q. lxxxv. art. 7.

the most judicious philosophers of modern times are now agreed. "Our imaginative and poetic feelings," says one of them, "are as much a part of ourselves, as our limbs and our organs of sense. They are so woven into our nature that they mingle themselves with almost every word and deed. For a metaphysician to discard these powers from his system, is to shut his eyes to the loftiest qualities of the soul, and is as unaccountable as it would be for a physiologist to overlook the very integuments of our animal frame. It is by the imagination, more perhaps than by any other faculty of the soul, that man is raised above the condition of a beast. Beasts have senses, and to a certain extent also they possess, I think, the powers of abstraction, though this is denied by Locke; but of the imaginative powers they offer perhaps no single trace. These high attributes of the soul confer on it a creative energy—aid it even in its generalizations from pure reason—bring before it vivid images of the past, and glowing anticipations of the future—teach it to link together material and immaterial things—to mount up from earth to heaven. As a matter of fact, men do possess imaginative powers, and ever have delighted, and ever will delight in their exercise; and to exclude them from a system of psychology, is to mutilate and not to analyse the faculties of the soul. They may have been abused, but what of that? Every faculty has been abused and turned to evil."* To the same effect, speaks Frederick Schlegel: "Fancy is fruitful; it is the inventive and peculiarly creative power of man, but it is blind, and often deceitful. Not in a similar way productive is reason, the power of reflection, the inward rule of customary proportions in his life; for to be really productive and to bring forth truth, it cannot succeed with all its reasoning, or if it should produce any thing, as in false philosophy, or in the mere rational system, it will be something dead-born, empty intellectual phantoms of pure nothing. Reason is but one half of the soul, and fancy is the other half. In love alone is the soul wholly and perfectly reunited in one full consciousness."† What a beautiful summary of the Catholic philosophy in a peasant or a sage! in whom the charity of faith sanctifies every thought and faculty of his being? We are told by the moderns that it was a gross sys-

tem, rising out of the sensuality of man, and recommending itself only to the imagination of the people: they would persuade us that the schoolmen never saw the pure light of reason. But, such assertions merit little attention even on the ground of a novelty; for when the vulgar derided the seven wise men of Greece, Thales and the rest—they used to call them poets. True, the schoolmen were poets, and the ages of faith were imaginative ages; but not the less were they united in a mystic and wondrous union of intelligence with truth. It is a poor boast of later generations that they have first beheld the empire of reason,* when that domination implies the annihilation of one half of the soul, and of the great cementing power, which held the former parts in union.

Alluding to this deep feeling, this power of appreciating the wonderful and wild, a German philosopher observes, "that we have not learned sufficiently to appreciate the beauty of life in the middle ages, and that a consideration of its fresh youthful energy, with its rich religious imagination, might alone convert us to the opinion of Herder, that it would have been well for us to have lived then."† There is no surrender of sober judgment in having such views.

We have before seen what an immensurable importance was ascribed to reason by the scholastic philosophers, and we may feel assured now, that if they use the imagination also, it is not to give it an undivided empire. "All these things are beautiful," says St. Anselm, "and are to be received as if a picture; but if there be not any thing solid on which they may rest, they will not seem sufficient to infidels; for he who wishes to make a picture chooses something solid on which to paint, in order that his painting may endure, for no one paints on water or on air. Therefore, when we show to infidels these conveniences of which you speak, as if pictures of a thing, and not the thing itself, they will suppose that we have only been painting on a cloud; therefore, we must show first the solidity of this truth, and the proof that such things were."‡ The schoolmen were men of imagination; the moderns under the dominion of reason; Well, is this a fact so certain? Is it impossible that there should be a mistake here?

Speaking of Malebranche, the Viscount

* *Antichità Romantiche d'Italia*, Epoc. 11. 192.

† *Liebner Hugo von St. Victor und die Theolog. Richtungen seiner Zeit*. 240.

‡ *Cur Deus Homo*, c. 4.

* Sedgwick on the Studies of the University, p. 50.

† *Philosophie der Sprache*, 31.

de Bonald says, "that Fontenelle supposed him to have a great deal of imagination in his philosophy. The most severe thinker that ever lived, who puts images only into his style, while his thoughts are purely the suggestions of reason, passed thus for a man of imagination, while Locke and Condillac, who, in a style continually abstract and without figure, thought only of images, who had only senses and sensations in their thoughts, passed for men who had conceptions; whereas, the truth was precisely in the contrary assertions. Malebranche was a man of conceptions, and Locke and Condillac men of imagination."*

Perhaps what induced so many to suppose that the scholastic philosophy was imaginative to the neglect of solidity, was the indefinite and incomplete character which it presented, under many points of view; but an attentive consideration of the causes which produced this effect, would lead perhaps to a different conclusion. It is true the schoolman and the mystic appears sometimes in his writing, as one who goes, yet where he tends knows not; but the modern critics who censure him, should remark with Novalis, that "order and definition alone do not constitute clearness, and that there is often more fulness as well as progressive capacity in men of intricate minds."† The models of classic composition cannot be urged against them, for it was the grammarians of the lower empire who divided the ancient writings into books and parts, and who thought they had done great things in distributing the narrative of Livy into Decades. The scholastic and mystic books, where most they seem indefinite, correspond with our souls, in which feeling and thought, as Tick says, "come like wave upon wave; one thought being cast out by another. Our feelings are only felt as they shift and pass—our delight merely gushes through us, one moment it entrances us, the next it has vanished." Hence St. Augustin complains, that he is always displeased with his own words, as he is greedy of something better, which he often interiorly enjoys before he begins to explain it; and when his words fail to express it, he is afflicted, for his tongue does not suffice to his heart. "All that I understand," he adds, "I wish that he who hears me may understand, and I perceive that I do not speak so as to succeed in this, chiefly, because the intelligence, like a rapid coruscation, flashes through the

soul, whereas speech is slow and long, and very dissimilar; and while it revolves these things, the other has already buried itself in its secrets."*

In the mystic writings of the Catholic school, as poets say,

"Desires and adorations

Winged persuasions, and veil'd destinies,
Splendors and glooms, and glimmering incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight phantasies,
And sorrow, with her family of sighs
And pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile, instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp:—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream."

Of these grand conceptions the last part, as in a tragedy, as in life too, you rarely find. Theirs is an unfinished structure like so many of their grand cathedrals; but what sublimity in all that we can see, and what an exquisite harmony in the parts that are completed! While of wisdom and of justice speaking, amidst soft looks of pity, they dart a glance as keen as is the lightning's stroke, when it doth rive the knots of some ancestral oak. "Undoubtedly, they saw," as St. Anselm says, "that whatever they could say or know respecting the great truths of revelation, there were deeper reasons involved which still remained hidden from them."† They leave much indefinite, for they knew well that the things they had to deal with were indefinite, and that they could not fetter them in the language of a formal definition, without violating their nature.

This caused the different sects of heretics which had each partial view of some one or other favourite truth, to say in Scripture language, that "their trumpet gave an uncertain sound;" and the charge was true as far as it only expressed their resolution to exaggerate nothing, and colour nothing, to frame no system out of disjointed members and isolated sentences. "Let our admiration be discreet," says Richard of St. Victor, "that in the foreknowledge and wisdom of God, we may admire nothing that is false. Let our congratulation be discreet, that we may venerate nothing vain in predestination, or the divine dispositions. Both are wonderful without the aid of falsehood—both are sweet without the condiment of vanity."‡ Although few, there are not wanting however some later writers, who have understood the real value of this forbearance.

"Some men wonder," says Marsilius

* Legislation Primitive, i. 91.
† Schriften, ii. 228.

* De Cat. Rudibus. † Cur Deus Homo. 2.
‡ De Contemplatione, P. i. Lib. ii. c. 25.

Ficinus, "why we follow with such attention Plato, who always seems to be conversant with paradoxes and things marvellous."* These could not have been men who had drunk deep of the Catholic philosophy, which presents a similar handle for accusations to the thoughtless vulgar. Probably their style of writing is another reason for denying the character of philosophy to some of their works. Men will not be persuaded to designate as philosophy a book, like that of which Picus of Mirandula could say, "daily when fatigue and weariness come over me, I turn to it as if to retire into a garden, where I find such delight that nothing pleases me now more than to be again fatigued and weary, in order that a second time I may have the same recreation."† But when the subjects treated of partake of the beauty and grandeur which belong to all Catholic views, this character was a necessary consequence. How could a page be abstract when charity had held the pen? On the other hand, how could it be without food for the imagination, when treating upon spirit? A Bonaventura to men who object that his style is not on a level with humanity, might reply in the words of Æschylus to Euripides—

ἀνάγκη

Μεγάλων γλωσσῶν καὶ διανοιῶν ἴσα καὶ τὰ ῥήματα
τίκτεται.

Yes, closely allied to heaven-bred poesy must be the expression of Catholic truth.

Having considered the philosophy of the clean of heart, in relation to its humble, practical, popular, and poetic character, let us proceed to remark its Catholicity. Here was its grand prerogative, the consideration of which will require some delay. The aspirations of the human intelligence after the universal view, which the Creator from eternity destined for the beatitude of the clean of heart, can be discerned through all the philosophic literature of the ancient world. Parmenides, in his poems, affirmed and proved, that all things belonged to unity, *ἐν εἰναι τὸ πᾶν*: and Zeno, as Socrates observed, seemed willing to express the same opinion, only in different words, asserting that there are not many things.‡ "Since we are by nature most desirous of truth and wisdom, we should be directed," say the Pythagoreans, "to that science which is one, which in itself comprises all things,

and which is the sum of all contemplation."* Plato has no other idea of philosophy. "The multitude," he says, "can never attain to a conception of the beautiful, and not of many beautiful things; of the essence of all things, and not of many individual things: therefore it can never attain to philosophy."†

"It is an ancient tradition of metaphysicians," says Duns Scotus, "that in the foundation of nature nothing is distinct."‡ The schoolmen were not unobservant of this. "The wisdom of God," says Richard of St. Victor, "is simple and one, although it is distinguished by different words, that it may be more easily taken by us. It is circular, for in all ordinations of eternal wisdom the beginning agrees with the end."§ "Unity belongs to the reason of goodness," says the angelic doctor, "all things desire unity, as goodness; and things only exist in as much as they are one. Whence we see that all things are repugnant to division, and that the dissolution of any thing arises always from its defect."|| "The appetite for unity," he says, "is the cause of pain. Every separation is opposed to unity. Quid est aliud dolor, nisi quidam sensus divisionis, vel corruptionis impatiens? For the good of every thing consists in a certain unity—so that every thing seeks unity, as goodness. Pain, therefore, is caused by the appetite for that unity in which consists the perfection of nature. The separation of hurtful things is desired in as much as they take away the desired unity; therefore, it is the love of unity which inspires an appetite for effecting their separation."¶

The same thought breaks out occasionally in the philosophic writings of the moderns. Lord Bacon praises the speculation of Parmenides and Plato, but laments that it was only a speculation in them.** "All ideas," says Fichte, "originally and essentially are one; it is only with reference to the objects upon which that one primary idea pours itself out, and in which it embodies itself within the sphere of our feelings and consciousness, that it breaks itself into a variety of forms, which several forms may themselves now be termed several ideas. An emanation from the one original idea, which employs itself in the constructing and reproducing the whole universe entirely out of

* Jamblich. Adhort. ad Philos. cap. 4.

† Plat. de Repub. Lib. vi.

‡ Lib. ii. Sent. Dist. iii. Q. v.

§ Ric. S. Vict. Allegoriæ Tabernac. Fœd.

|| P. l. q. ciii. art. 3. ¶ P. i. q. xxxvi. art. 4.

•• Advanc. of Learn.

* Epist. Lib. i.

† Joan. Pic. Mir. Epist. Lib. i. 23.

‡ Plat. Parmen.

itself, that is, by the processes of pure speculation is philosophy; for this has always formed the essence of philosophy whenever it has appeared among men, and will continue to form it for ever."

Heresy, therefore, stands at once condemned, without consulting the ecclesiastical judge. It is in advance rejected by all philosophy. For what is heresy? It is a point of view, a rejection of the grand whole, the choosing of a part cut off. Hear how it is lately defined by one externally attached to it. "Their distinctive peculiarities resolve mainly into a sheer abuse of words; or into an arbitrary and unfounded preference of some over other parts of a complex system of truths; by which means propositions essentially true, being separated from those adjuncts which modify and explain their meaning, come to be, in effect, no better than falsehoods." Heretics answer precisely to that multitude described by Socrates, who are incapable of forming a general conception of things, *οὐ δυναμένων εἰς τὸ πᾶν αἰεὶ βλέπειν*.^{*} Open any of their writings and you will see immediately the truth of this observation, for never will you find one of them taking any but a partial narrow view.

When King Balak wanted Balaam to accuse and curse Israel, he said to him, "Veni mecum in alterum locum, unde partem Israël videas, et totum videre non possis; inde maledicito ei."[†] This is virtually the counsel of those who encourage one another to accuse the Catholic Church. The sum of their instruction amounts to nothing but this: "Come where you may see a part only, and not the whole; then you may curse it heartily." They look only on one side, which, when they have cut off from all the rest, and isolated, can of course present nothing complete. Hear, for example, what a very worthy writer has lately said respecting the monastic discipline:—"It is a narrow, unsocial, sour, selfish, pernicious spirit, which leads the ascetic to forsake his most obvious duties to bury himself in useless solitude. Cuthbert had to learn that his own personal holiness was attached to the discharge of the active duties." Reader, you observe what clouds are here. From taking only one point of view, he falls into the absurdity of concluding that men of a sour, selfish, pernicious spirit, who forsook their most obvious duties, and became useless, were able to inspire their contemporaries,

who yet must be granted to have had common sense, with that love and reverence which can only arise from a conviction of superior virtue.

Again, mere syllables detached have often blinded men to the vision of truth. "All heresies have sprung up," says John Picus of Mirandula, "from men attending not so much to the deep sense as to the outward bark of the words of the evangelists. Thus the letters major me est were fatal to Arius, donec peperit ur Elvidius, ut abundaret delictum to Marcion, aliquando to Basilides, scriptum esse dii estis to Eanomius." Therefore Hilary says, "The interpretation of things said is to be derived from the causes of saying them: for things are not subservient to words, but words to things."* Heresy, therefore, it must be remembered, does not consist in pure error, but in a distorted and imperfect view of truth. According to St. Augustin, "All evil is good corrupted;" and the holy Doctor proceeds to say, "Nulla falsa doctrina est, quæ non aliqua vera intermiscet."[†]

Heretics will look but at a fragment of each Catholic doctrine, and then they logically conclude that it is not a whole truth. Hence the Valentinians used to call the Catholics "simple," attending only to their learned ignorance; the Montanists animal discerning only their humanity and moderation; Vigilantius ash-collectors, or bone-keepers, remarking only the fact of their having relics in churches; Julian Galilæans, looking only to the country of their founder; the modern sects papists, Romanists, seeing nothing but their obedience to the supreme pontiff and the See of Rome.

Cicero, to make man free, denies the foreknowledge of God. "But the Christian," says St. Augustin, "chooses both, confesses both, and by the faith of piety confirms both; for he will not allow that because God is certain of the order of causes, therefore man can have no free choice: this very choice is in the order of causes, which God foresees; for He who foresees the causes of all things cannot be ignorant of what our choice will be, since that choice is the cause of our actions."[‡]

Lactantius remarks, that it would be easy to teach nearly all truth by collecting the opinions of the different sects of

* Plato, Theætetus.

† Num. xxiii.

* Apolog.

† Hom. Lib. ii. Quæst. Ev. c. 40.

‡ De Civ. Dei, Lib. v. 9.

philosophers. "If any one," he says, "were to gather them up and arrange them all into one body, he would not dissent from us. All truth, and the whole secret of divine religion, might thus be obtained."* This is strictly true of the different sects which have been cut off from unity: there is not a single doctrine of the Catholic religion for which an advocate may not be found in some eminent disciple of one or other of these heresies; and it is curious, though painful, to hear them so pompously delivering a Catholic truth, imagining that its discovery is due to their own intelligence. Milton unconsciously bore witness to the fact, in the following remarkable words:—"Truth, indeed, came once into the world, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on. But after 1500 years arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down, gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, lords and commons, nor ever shall do," he adds, indeed, "until her Master's second coming:" but the blessed clean of heart were not the while left, among these sad seekers, to pick truth out of partialities; for they had followed not lords and commons, but that holy Mother who could bring together every joint and member, and could remould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection.

St. Augustin, commenting on the passage, "Jerusalem, which is built as a city whose participation is in itself," demands, "What do we understand by this itself? What is this which is always the same, not at one time this and at another that, but which is in the same manner as he who said, 'Ego sum qui sum?' It is that of which we read, 'Tu autem idem ipse es, et anni tui non deficient. Behold 'itself,' whose years do not fail! Brethren, do not our years daily fail? Already they have failed, and are about again to fail. No one has 'itself' from himself. Attend to this. The body hath it not, because it does not remain. It is changed by age,

by alteration of place and of seasons, by disease and infirmity. The celestial bodies remain not in themselves; they have mutations and operations to fulfil. The human soul itself does not stand; for with how many changes and cogitations is it varied? with how many pleasures, with how many cupidities, is it altered and torn? The mind itself of man, which is called rational, is mutable: it is not 'itself:' one time it wishes, another it wishes not; one time it knows, another it knows not; one time it remembers, another it forgets. Therefore no one has 'itself' from himself; it can only be had by turning to the true Lord, who is truly 'itself;' to whom it is said, 'Mutabis ea et mutabuntur, tu autem idem ipse es.'"^{*} This, therefore, was had by turning to the Catholic Church, in which, during all ages, was the most complete and unchanging unity of doctrine. Savonarola, addressing the philosophers around him, adduces the fact of this permanent unity of belief, among such a series of innumerable intelligences, in proof of the truth of the Catholic religion. "In philosophy," he remarks, "there were as many opinions as heads; and if the wisest of them were unable to fix the intelligence of man, even in believing the few things which reason dictates and nature herself teaches, how much less could they have succeeded in regard to things surpassing reason? Whereas, in the church, we behold the intelligence and the affections of an infinite multitude of men attached as if with nails of iron to believing and loving things which wholly exceed the capacity of reason, and transmitting the same unchangeable doctrine to their posterity."[†] The eternal wisdom, which brings to pass all things in order, by appointed means, has left a provision for securing the unity of truth on earth, in the constitution of the church, which was to preserve it, analogous to that by which universal nature is governed and sustained. The primacy was therefore, as Pope Innocent III. remarked on the day of his consecration, attached to holy Peter's chair, by our Lord before his passion, when he said, "Thou art Peter;" during his passion, when he said, "Simon, Satan hath sought thee, but I have prayed for thee: when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;" and after his passion, when he said to him thrice,

* Tractat. in Ps. 121.

† Triump. Crucis, Lib. ii. 3.

* Instit. vii. 17.

"Feed my sheep."* The church of Jerusalem, indeed, as the same pontiff remarks, in point of time might be styled the mother, of all churches; but Rome was such, in point of dignity, as Andrew was called earlier than Peter, who yet was preferred before him.† So that, whoever departed from the doctrine of the Roman Church, to use the emphatic language of Savonarola, was known to depart from Christ.‡

Let us hear those speak who first beheld the descent on earth of the city of God. "I think that no one would contest this position," says St. Clement of Alexandria,—"that there is only one true church, which remounts to the apostolic time by means of its traditions, and to which all those belong who practise justice and virtue; for as there is but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ, it was proper that the church, that is to say, what is most venerable after God, should exhibit the great character of unity, since it has God himself for a model. The church, which is essentially one, ought then necessarily to be composed of elements of the same nature; and woe to the heretics who endeavour to make it lose this precious unity by dividing it! For us, we recognise only one ancient and Catholic Church, which is one by its nature, by its principles, by its origin, by its excellence, which reunites all its children in the unity of one same faith."§ "Such," says St. Irenæus, "are the instructions, such is the faith, which the Church has received; and although she is spread throughout the universe, she guards with care this precious treasure, as if she inhabited but one house; she professes each of these articles of faith with a perfect conformity, as if she had only one soul and one heart. Behold what it is she teaches, what it is she preaches, what it is she transmits by tradition, as if she had only one mouth and only one tongue!"|| Human power had nothing to do with the bond of this vast society; so that to all who belonged to it the Platonic words might have been justly addressed:—"O men, I consider you all as being relations, fellow-domestics, and citizens by nature, not by law; for like natures are relations; but law, being the tyrant of men, forces many things contrary to nature."¶

We have heard the fact. Now let us

attend to the mystery. "Matter," says an illustrious historian, "desires dispersion, spirit desires unity; matter, essentially divisible, aspires to disunion and discord. Material unity is nonsense; in policy it is a tyranny. Spirit alone has the right to unite; alone it comprehends, it embraces, and, to say all in a word, it loves. Unity must exist by spirit, by the church; but, to give unity, the church itself must be one; then, in the material dispersion, the invisible unity of intelligences will appear—real unity, that of spirits and wills. Thus the feudal world contained, under the appearance of chaos, a real and powerful harmony; while the pompous delusion of the imperial unity contained only anarchy."*

The philosophy of the ages of faith, emanating from that house upon the mountain to which were to come all nations, was not therefore local, as that of the school of Elea or Crotona, the Italic and Ionic (for the term Romanos, used by Engippius and other ancient writers to signify Catholics as opposed to Arians and other early sects, was merely an allusion to the supreme jurisdiction of Peter's chair, mentioned by St. Irenæus)—or national, as that of the Indians and Egyptians, and according to the fancy of certain poets in modern times, who extol the revolution of the sixteenth century as being "the deliverance of national individualities"†—or confined to castes, as that of the Brahmins and Magi—or derived from any man, as that of Pythagoras, Zoroaster, or Solon. Heresies, ever trusting in some one or other individual of extraordinary eloquence, as in the most glorious mortal that ever existed, like an Arius, Faustus, or the apostate of Erfurt, all of whose unrivalled powers of discourse are attested by St. Epiphanius,‡ St. Augustin, and Belarmin, were even called from particular men, as from Arius, Valentinian, Marcion, and Basileidus.§ But all the great luminaries of the church were zodiacal, being successively swallowed up in the rays of the sun of justice. The one true ancient church was Catholic, universal as to place, common to all nations and to all races, and had God alone for its founder. Against its constant and unbroken chain of testimony nothing in the intellectual order could prevail—not a philosopher, if you

* In Hurter, *Geschichte*, tom. iii. l. 93.

† Id. i. 283. ‡ *Triump. Crucis*, Lib. iv. 6.

§ *Strom. Lib. vii.*

|| *S. Irenæ advers. Hæres. Lib. i. 10.*

¶ *Plato, Protagoras.*

* Michelet, *Hist. de France*, tom. i. 433.

† *Rosenkranz, Geschichte der deutschen Poesie im Mittelalter*, 30.

‡ *Hæres. 69.*

§ *Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. 17.*

will only credit Lord Bacon, who, after remarking that in latter times men who come in their own names are received, concludes that "the coming in a man's own name, without regard of antiquity or pater-nity, is no good sign of truth, although it be joined with the fortune and success of an 'Eam recipietis.'" The preacher might be learned, profound, eloquent, invested with dignity, ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ πρό γε τῆς ἀληθείας τυμπῆρος ἀνὴρ,*—not a bishop; he might become a teacher of error. Nestorius was patriarch of Constantinople, the second see of the Christian world, and yet he became chief of a party. For no individual were men to abandon the unity of the church. St. Augustin says of the holy fathers, "What they believed I believe; what they held I hold; what they taught I teach; what they preached I preach;"† and yet he says, "I do not receive what blessed Cyprien thought on one point, because this the church hath not received."‡ Such was the language of Catholics in all ages. "The opinion of St. Thomas is nothing to the question," says Picus of Mirandula, "because to depart from the opinion of Thomas is not to depart from faith; and there is often a difference of opinion among the Thomists concerning his opinion."§ Scotus, in the third of the Sentences, undermines the whole process of Anselm, in his book *Cur Deus Homo*. Scot and Thomas differ respecting the fall of St. Peter. "You cannot say," he adds, "this contradicts Augustin, or Jerome, or Gregory, or some other father: therefore it is heretical; for although the writings of the holy doctors, without the canon of the Bible, are to be delivered and read with due reverence, nevertheless their sayings are not of such immovable authority that it is not lawful to contradict them, unless when the contrary is evidently and expressly proved or firmly determined by the church."

Such was the doctrine of all Catholic theologians. "Mark the sentence which excommunicates all heresy exalting itself against the Catholic faith: he does not say," continues Melchior Canus, "error exalting itself against a bishop, against inquisitors, against theologians, whether of Paris or of Salamanca, Complutensia or Cologne, but against the Catholic faith." The school gives great license, and permits one to defend whatever is probable; so

that what is contrary to the Scotists or Thomists is not necessarily an error, for it is only the authority of the Sentences, in which all agree, constituting a principle of common faith which cannot be opposed without rashness. The axioms of the school are twofold: the one are chiefly concerned with philosophy; the other with the faith and manners necessary for a Christian people. From the former men may freely differ; from the latter to dissent is a danger which we would shun as poison. Still it is most certain, that whatever dogma is received by the whole school is held also by the universal church; and there is no decree of the school which has not a certain origin, either in the sacred writings, or in the apostolic tradition, or in the definitions of councils or pontiffs; so that the placita of the schools cannot be denied without danger of the faith. The opinions of the school are a very different thing; for these may be disputed or denied by any one, without impiety.*

But the view of the blessed clean of heart was Catholic in a more profound sense than any in which we have as yet considered it. It was Catholic: therefore some would say, at one time, "it is a religion for the people," at another, "it is a religion for kings"—one observer would remark its adaptation to the wants of the poor and ignorant; another, its admirable fitness for the learned and thoughtful. Every object of nature and art, every part of the social state, even in countries where it was abjured, presented as it were a finger to point the way to it; from all sides were avenues leading to it and centering in it; and every man could enjoy it in connexion with the peculiar disposition, habits, wants, and desires of his own intellect. "Vere multiplex spiritus," exclaims St. Bonaventura, "qui tam multipliciter filiis hominum inspiratur, ut non sit qui se abscondat a calore ejus."† Hence among converts to the Catholic Church, were persons of every possible variety of character:—poets, metaphysicians, economists, historians, the imaginative, the positive, the lover of quiet, the lover of action, the artist, the mechanical philosopher, the sensitive, the phlegmatic, all come to her;—

"——— and all
Are blessed, even as their sight descends
Deeper into the truth; wherein rest is
For every mind."‡———

* Plato de *Repub.* vi.

† Lib. i. Cont. Jul. cap. 5.

‡ Lib. ii. c. 32.

§ Pic. Mir. Apol.

* De *Locis Theolog.* Lib. xii. 9.

† *Medit. Vitæ Christi*, c. xxxvi.

‡ Dante, *Par.* xxviii.

"The Catholic religion is Catholic," says Bonald, "not in consequence of the universality of place, but of the necessity of principles. It is Catholic or general like geometric truths, which would not cease to be general truths though there were not to be a geometrician in the world;" and the reformed system, though it were extended over the universe, would only be a particular religion, a private opinion, a heresy.* This, according to Staudenmaier, constituted its essential character. "In it lies the highest principle, inasmuch as it includes all principles. One cannot say that it proceeds from any one point of view and follows any particular direction, for it is its property, in view of truth, to contain all points of view and to involve all directions."†

Hence the great metaphysical power of the church, no less wondrous than its moral. It furnished the solution of all difficulties, and therefore, should have received homage from the human intelligence, if it were only on the principle advanced by all philosophers, that the degree of confidence which a theory merits, is in proportion to the number of truths or phenomena of which it gives a reason: accordingly Savonarola concludes that the Catholic religion must be true, from the observation that it affords a solution for all objections, and that the more it is attacked the more its perfections are brought to light.‡ A philosopher, on embracing it, might with a peculiar sense exclaim, in the words of the Introit on the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi, "Factus est Dominus protector meus, et eduxit me in latitudinem." In fact, from that moment, every thing in art or nature seemed to offer itself to serve him. As the poet says, all things became slaves to his holy and heroic strain:

"Earth, sea, and sky, the planets, life, and fame,
And fate, or whate'er else binds the world's
wondrous frame."

The Catholic is he who, even on social and human grounds, according to Marsilius Ficinus, should be honoured by all; for he himself honours all; he favours the good, extols the ingenuous, admires the learned, venerates the saints, and adores God in all.§ Embracing the

grand whole without break or interruption, the Catholic view was the most rational, the most complete in all its parts, or rather it was the only view which could satisfy reason throughout. Moreover it had something to correspond with all parts and faculties of human nature, and demanded no destruction to secure its action. Novalis might be well struck at this fact. "The Herrnhuters," he says, "annihilate their reason, persons of susceptibility their penetration, persons of penetration their heart. No act is more common among men than the act of annihilation."* The Catholic possessed that privilege which poets have so often longed for;—he could embody and unbosom that which is most within him—could wreak his thoughts upon expression, and thus throw soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings strong or weak, all that he would have sought, and all he sought, bore, knew, felt, and yet breathed, into one word—and that one word faith.—Therefore he spoke with hope, while other men lived and died unheard, with a most voiceless thought.

The moderns love and see opposition, and a spirit of mutual destruction, where men of the middle ages loved and saw union. "It is not a little singular," says a recent historian, "that while the Hibernians were the first teachers of scholastic theology in Europe, so an Hibernian, John Scot Erigena, himself unrivalled among the dialecticians of his day, should have been also the first to introduce into the arena the antagonist principle of mysticism:" than this, it would be hard to frame a more erring sentence; and yet the profoundest writers of the modern discipline seem to experience the same difficulty which lead to it. Albert Leibner, in his valuable work on Hugo of St. Victor, speaks of the scholastic and mystic principles, as constituting two extremes in psychology: "How," he demands, "could a union of two such contradictory elements be possible?"† Nevertheless, he admits the fact that, according to the views of this philosopher, both were necessary for the perfection of the highest spiritual life, and that in his own mind the union had been realized. The logical school was concerned with truth, more immediately, indeed, in relation to the intelligence, and the intuitive or mystic school was concerned with it more directly, in relation to love—but these were not antagonists, they were rather

* Legislat. Prim.

† Johan Scotus, und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. i. 218.

‡ Triump. Crucis, ii. 8.

§ Mars. Fic. Epist. Lib. viii.

* Schriften, ii. 160.

+ P. 45.

identical; or at least when one was wanting the Catholic type was not followed.

"*Tantum lucere vanum*," says St. Bernard, "*tantum ardere parum: lucere et ardere perfectum*."—Let us pause awhile to consider the union of beams in the undivided light. Mystic is derived from *μῦσος*, a word which, at one time, gives the hollow sighing sound caused by closing the mouth and holding the lips together, which indicates that secrecy is a holy thing. St. Bonaventura says, that it is called mystic theology because it is closed or occult to all but those to whom it is revealed by God.* Some have said that mysticism is to be traced from the writings of Dionysius, and of Plato; but it is in general an error to suppose that any philosophy has been able to overcome the freedom of the human spirit; and it argues as little knowledge of mysticism to derive it from Plato, as it does of the scholastic philosophy to ascribe its invention to Aristotle. "In Christian contemplation," continues Staudenmaier, "and in the gnosis of St. John, must be sought the root of true mysticism. Mysticism is the scholastic of sentiment, and scholastic philosophy is the mysticism of the philosophic or speculative reason. They appear together, and are inseparably interwoven." St. Anselm says of the former, "*Qui non crediderit, non experietur; et qui expertus non fuerit, non intelliget*."†

Truth can only be in totality. The whole can only be known rightly, when it is seized and understood on all its sides. The general is as important as the particular: therefore the harmonious cultivation of the powers of the soul is the most wholesome, and the most joyful exercise; and by this, reason and feeling are both developed together, and united so as to form one spirit. Right reason does not therefore render cold the inspiration, nor will feeling so overwhelm the reason as to incapacitate it to discharge its functions—thought becomes truth, and feeling, life: both occupy the spirit, and are inseparable where truth is living, and life is true. The feeling strengthens its truth by means of thought, and thought its life, by feeling; but the spirit is one and the same in both.

It was thus in the middle ages. So the equilibrium remained ever constant; and in the mighty energy of men, who stood

on one or other of these sides, was revealed the eternal energy of the one Christian spirit. The thinking mind was ever at the side of the holy life of feeling, and vice versa. This unity appears in all the great luminaries of the Church. At one time it was the endeavour of these men, through the faculty of thought, through scientific inquiry, in a word, through philosophy, to put down in an immense system the one great truth of the world, and of Christianity; and in this effort they worked as scholastics; at another their efforts were directed to bind themselves in the unity of their spirit with the divine Spirit, to make that unity the soul of their whole life, that inexhaustible holy fountain, from which springs the power of the ideal, the mighty life in godly ideas, and the highest inspiration—and in this they worked as mystics. The harmony of all powers and exertions consisted in this union and combination of all in one. Such was Scot Erigena in the ninth, Bonaventura, who in such a remarkable manner combined subtilty of dialectics and the deep interior power of mysticism, speculation, and contemplation, in the middle of the scholastic and mystic ages, and Gerson towards their close. Thus the scholastic Hugo of St. Victor was also a mystic philosopher, and the mystic Richard of St. Victor a scholastic philosopher. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas of Aquin, by their commentaries on St. Dionysius, and their love for that author, showed clearly that to them the mystic element was any thing but foreign. Even St. Bernard, who came forward more as a mystic than as a scholastic, did nevertheless impart the same unity of direction to his efforts. And had not Abailard evinced a rash spirit of speculation, the holy light of Clairvaux would never have appeared in opposition. Only the false scholastics did St. Bernard attack and not the true, with which his mysticism always was combined on the common ground of faith. So that, in short, when Gerson wrote a theory, in which religious speculations and mysticism were presented in close and inseparable union, he did nothing else but what the whole middle age had done before him.*

Another characteristic of the Catholic view, was the deep and practical conviction associated with it, arising out of the circumstance of its not being a selection at

* S. Bonav. *Mystica Theolog.* ad fin.
† *De Fide Trinit.* c. 2.

* Joan. Scot. *Erig. und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit.* 478.

choice out of different opinions. "The idea of philosophy," says Novalis, "is a mysterious tradition. All eclectics are sceptics at the bottom, and the more they embrace, the more are they sceptical"—profound and lucid words!

We have already seen that Catholic philosophers could only confirm and illustrate the truths transmitted to them. Their wisdom, being Catholic, was traditional, and that it was so understood by them may be witnessed in the chronicle of Ademan, a monk of St. Eparchus, who brings down his history to the year 1028, and thus records the progress of the school: "Bede taught Simplicius, who taught Raban, who taught Alcuin, who taught Smaragdus, who taught Theodulf, bishop of Orleans, who taught Helias, the Scot, bishop of Angouleme, who taught Henricus, who left the monks Remi and Ucbald heirs of philosophy."*

Touron remarks how much wisdom St. Thomas derived from attending to the counsel. "Neglect not the narrative of seniors, for they learned from their fathers; since from them you will learn understanding, and in time of necessity you will give an answer."† "Much avails human study," says the Angelic doctor, "when a man carefully, frequently, and reverently applies his mind to the testimony of his ancestors, not neglecting it through indolence, or despising it through pride."‡

The ascetic writers themselves, were rather collectors and transmitters, than professed authors of thoughts. The Imitation, as Michelet remarks, was nothing but an abridgment of the ascetic writers of the middle age; there is nothing in it which cannot be found in former writings; it is only a judicious selection from them. Besides observing the natural consequences of the combination of intelligence, which could be discerned by the ancient poet, who said, "Nemo solus satis sapit," men were impressed with a conviction, in ages of faith, that an influence to kindle and illumine, far above any natural cause, prevailed within the pale of this unity. The *Væ soli* of the Scripture, are words to them full of mystic and divine wisdom, which would have been quite sufficient to show the fatal consequences of isolation, and the folly of those who would read "Happy those who stand alone."

"You are deceived, holy Thomas, you are deceived," says St. Bernard, "if you hope to see the Lord separated from the College of the Apostles. Truth does not love corners; bye paths do not please it. It stands in the midst; that is, it delights in common discipline, common life, common studies. How long then will you seek private consolations with such labour of self-will, and beg for them with such blushing?"* "Let them gnaw as much as they like," says Louis of Blois, "in their holes and corners, the dry bark of their errors: never will they be nourished with the grace of God unless they be within the splendid house of God, that is, in the Catholic Church."†

Again, a great and most remarkable privilege, attached to the Catholic view, was the power which it imparted of detecting in an instant the true relation of things, and their ultimate consequences. The philosophy at present opposed to it, which offers nothing universal but the variations and anarchy of religious opinions, leaves its disciples without the means of finding their true position, or of being able to orient themselves, according to the expression of many languages. The Catholic religion, in an eminent degree, instructs its children in what Novalis terms "Socracy," which is the art of finding the point of truth, out of any given place, and of determining the relation of that given place to truth.‡

The gift of wisdom to the clean of heart, as Goerres remarks, is also the gift of all higher ideas, as far as relates to the use of knowledge, to the quickness with which the true nature of these ideas is discerned, to the power of seizing the whole depth of their contents, of understanding their mutual relation, of making clear their beginning and end, of holding them fast in their reciprocal positions, and of managing them in their movements.§ Nor is this advantage confined to the sphere of intellectual exercise, for he who is taught by God and not by man, that is, he who hears the church and bows to her authority, sees and estimates all things of life and manners as they are, and not as they are called or estimated. Therefore, from the first instant, he knows the real worth of all that he comes in contact with:—genius, learning, rank, dignity, are all valued by

* Buleus Hist. Univers. Paris, tom. i.

† Ec. viii. 14.

‡ ii. 2. Q. 49. a. 3. ad. 2.

* S. Bern. in Ascensione Dom. Serm. vi.

† Epist. ad Florentium.

‡ Schriften, ii. 128.

§ Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 195.

him exactly according to their real worth, and not the least higher than God intended them to be. Hence the self-possession, the noble air of freedom and conscious equality, joined with the strictest respect to degree of every kind which characterises the Catholic. The reason of this was evident to the schoolmen; for as Duns Scotus says, "nothing is perfectly known, unless God be perfectly known; therefore nothing is simply known, unless He be simply known. As the first heat is the cause of heat in all other things, so is God the cause of knowing all other things, and, therefore, is He the first object of the intelligence."* St. Clement of Alexandria says, that it is the property of this high wisdom to be able to distinguish the sophist from the philosopher, the rhetorician from the dialectician;† and that truth, shining out as the sun, enables us to discern what is really true in the Greek philosophy, and to detect and convict all sophistical confidence of speech.‡ "Non literatus sed spiritualis omnia dijudicat," says Hugo of St. Victor.§ The Catholic, if faithful, is in fact this spiritual man who judges all things, and is himself judged of no one: a few moments' conversation between him and other men, however his superiors in all other respects, will place this beyond doubt: and, in fact, how could it be otherwise?

"True notions, not alone of history," as Wagner says, "but of all things ordained for social life around us, are only possible from the Christian, that is, Catholic point of view, in which we recognise the personal and holy God, as also the personal and free action of man."|| If we know not the object of Almighty God in creation, nor his will in the progress of the Church—history and the whole order of human life will be a sealed book.

The extraordinary predominance of vanity and worldly emulation in London, arises from there being no divine type kept ever present, by a daily office, in the minds of men, by which they could judge of their own motives and actions. The fancy of each man is his rule.

Euripides represents *Æthra*, the mother of Theseus, speaking of being in error as to the gods dishonouring them, but thinking justly on all other subjects.¶ The boast

is absurd, as even some heathen philosophers themselves would allow. "He who knows God," says Staudenmaier, "knows in him all other things in their true condition: in this manner thought has become, by means of Christianity, much deeper, more true and intimate in relation to the heart. Its ideas are universal, as its consciousness is divine."*

From how many errors and absurdities would men have been delivered in their capacity of historians, metaphysicians, moralists, legislators, economists, and rulers, if they had been content to adhere to the great rule, never to condemn what the church has expressly sanctioned and approved, and never to approve of what she has condemned. Do you ask for a demonstration? Experience is the proof, and it is conclusive; for it is here that we see verified the remark of Lacordaire, that "God provides ingenious insults for the pride of man." Hence it is that a conversation between a Catholic and a disciple of any other philosophy, is sure to terminate like one of Plato's dialogues, when a Sophist has opposed Socrates—for the lame in the right course outstrips the swift, who has left the way. The issue might remind a looker on of what Socrates says, "that the meanest Lacedæmonian, though at first he would appear awkward in his language, would in course of conversation throw in, like a dexterous lancer, some short and nervous remark, so as to make the other look no wiser than a child."† There could not be a happier image to describe the contest between a modern philosopher and a humble disciple of the Catholic Church: for what was it which enabled the latter, starting up even in perverest times, to bind the scorpion falsehood with a wreath of ever-living flame, until the monster stung itself to death? It was the truth of pure lips contained in a few short plain words. The objections of men, who, if they had the power, would confound all unity on earth, can copiously and diffusely with choice words and grave sentences, be amplified and adorned; but they can never stand before the short logical and acute answers of the Catholic, who has learned well his catechism. He who hears the Church will not care for ten thousand words of men. The objectors are soon made to appear confused at their

* Duns Scot. in Lib. i. Sent. dist. iii. 9. 2, 3.

† Stromat. l. 9.

‡ Id. vi. 2.

§ Erud. Didasc. Lib. vi. 4.

|| System der Ideal Philosophie, 97.

¶ Suppl. 303.

* John Scotus Erig. und die Wissenschaft seiner zeit. l. 31.

† Plato, Protag.

own objection, and to wear the countenance of Protagoras, when Socrates drew him to reply that he would call some things good, even though they were not useful to mankind. These professors of reformed notions too, can all make long speeches; but none of them are as clever or as bold as Protagoras, who pretended to be able in reply, to make short also to specific questions. He, indeed, would have shrunk from making proof of his ability, in that respect, had not Socrates risen to depart, and all the hearers interposed to make him fulfil what he had engaged to do, when he declined absolutely relinquishing the mode of a lengthened harangue.* To combat each of the objections separately, would, indeed, be a long and wearisome task; but it was in the comprehensive glance at the grand whole, that lay the secret of the Catholic's power, as in those Grecian games which Pindar sung, where he who won the prize of the Pentathlon, which included the five games, might also boast of having carried off that of the Stadium,† because in the former the length and difficulties of each were considerably less than where each taken separately was made the trial; so in this contest, where the conviction of an adversary was the prize, one and the same conqueror might win the merit of having proved one point, though his demonstration of the whole system had previously rendered that one and every other certain. St. Francis Xavier was said by the Bonzes of Japan, to have had the power of removing by one word several different and even converse objections addressed to him at the same moment from all sides. Something of the same power may be said to belong to every one who defends the same cause; the cross is a universal answer, and the vast structure of Catholic wisdom is like that pyramid of the Egyptians, which was counted among the seven wonders of the earth, because receiving light on all sides, it did not obstruct it to any spot whatever, as it cast no shadow.‡

But we should never finish were we to dwell upon all the advantages which resulted to the intellect from the Catholic faith. It made each person like many persons, a genius. "Every person," says Novalis, "is the germ of an infinite genius." Catholicism could develop it, and bring out from each many persons in harmony. The Catholic philosopher necessarily lived

as it were in many places, and in many men.

Vox sermonum ejus ut vox multitudinis.* To him there was nothing peculiarly his own, and nothing foreign; all was at the same time his own and foreign: he knew how to appropriate to himself what was foreign, and to make foreign what was his own. "Let no one blame me," says Picus of Mirandula, "that I have been a guest in all schools, as if to whatever the tempest bore me; for I have always been accustomed to examine every kind of writing, esteeming it the sign of a narrow mind to confine one's self to any one porch or academy. In every family there is something remarkable, which is not common to it with others. There is in John Scot something vigorous, and full of force to overthrow—in Thomas, the solid and equable—in Ægidius, the terse and exact—in Francis, the strenuous and acute—in Albert, the ancient, ample, and magnificent—in Henry, as it seems to me always something sublime and worthy of veneration."† Thus, in a strict and philosophic sense, was continually fulfilled the prayer of the Church, "ut quod singuli obtulerunt ad majestatis tue honorem cunctis, proficiat ad salutem."‡

According to Hugo of St. Victor, philosophy is to be extended to all acts of men, so that there are as many parts of philosophy as there are diversities of things. Thus Vincent of Beauvais notices expressly, that there is a philosophy of architecture;§ and Michael Scot, in his division of philosophy, distinguishes that part which relates to the common acts of life; in fact, all which the Catholic philosopher did, said, and suffered, was whether with or without self consciousness, on artistic, scientific product, or operation; he spoke in epigrams, the maxims of the saints—he acted in a theatre, with angels and angelic men for audience—he held dialogues, even when the speakers were only within himself; for as language must be considered as thought rendered external and visible, so must thought be regarded as an internal language, and a continued conversation with one's self, and this in a sense so purely psychological, that we, ourselves, when we are alone, or think ourselves alone, are accustomed to think as if we were two persons, so as to feel that our inmost and deepest selves are really dramatic; and if this be the case

* Plato, Protag.

† Olymp. xiii.

‡ Tacitus, An. i. 99.

* Dan. x. 6.

† Joan. Pic. Mirand. de Hominum Dignitate.

‡ VII. Sund. after Pent.

§ Spec. Doctrinale, Lib. i. c. 15.

with all men by mere nature, how much more so is it with him, who, by grace and truth, has been enabled to recognise and hear distinctly the twofold action, and the double voice within his soul?

"Hence," as Frederick Schlegel remarks, "the holy hermits of past ages, in the deserts, who have led a life of meditation on godly things, and mysteries, represented the result of their meditation as no other, desired to clothe it in no other garb, and to bring it into no other form of view than a conversation of their soul with God. He who enjoyed the Catholic view again was pregnant with histories and anecdotes, for he held by tradition. When he appeared, he appeared as an artist, as a musician: his life was a poem. In a word, he gave to every thing that he touched or did, a scientific ideal form." To him a wide circle and a multiplicity of things were continually present, while his mind was a tower, that firmly set, shakes not its top for any blast that blows. Thus was formed that true great presence of mind which shone with such splendour in Sir Thomas More, and in myriads who resembled him through the long lapse of believing ages, making them kings of thought, lords of their oppressors, and natives of the world.

Hence we can understand the constant sleepless effort of men during ages of faith to Catholicise, that is, to arrange in the true order of the whole, to reduce to the ideal in which it exists in the eternal mind, every thing—politics, science, art—their ingenious endeavours to introduce the symbols of truth, amidst social forms, and to make religion enter into the detail of manners; for, as we remarked elsewhere, their leading thought appears to have been that the state and the family and the individual "ought each in its way to reflect the image of that order, and harmony by which they know the universe to be sustained and regulated."

Hence the type of all things in their minds was Catholic, that is to say, alas, the converse of what it is now; hence, their resolution, not to look without the Church for truths which they possessed within it. Their conclusion being that of Tertullian, who says, "even though we were still and always to inquire, yet where should we inquire? is it with the heretics, where all things are extraneous and adverse to our faith, and to approach whom we are forbidden? What servant would seek nourishment from a stranger, not to say from an enemy of his master? What soldier would

accept a donative and stipend from foreign, not to say hostile kings, unless he were a deserter and a rebel? *Nemo inde strui potest unde destruitur: nemo ab eo illuminatur a quo contenebratur. Quæramus ergo in nostro, et a nostris, et de nostro.*"* And, in sooth, not to have been content with that limitation, if such a solecism can be excused, would have been the extreme of ignorance, for where could be truth or wisdom, if not in the Catholic philosophy, in the mind which looked at the grand whole?

Could it be with the sages of the ancient world, of whom the first and wisest professed to know this only, that he nothing knew? or, with those, who, under the pretence of a more sound religion, have in these latter times revived that old philosophy? Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead; ignorant of themselves, of God much more? But in times maligned, how successful were the efforts of the clean of heart, to keep their wisdom Catholic and pure. Under the Roman emperors, and in the old society of the world, the pagan philosophy still left roots, and heresy was prompt to spring up as at first, in the time of the Apostles; but in the middle ages there was nothing to interrupt the holy simplicity, the one great view.

Who must not admire this admirable composition of discipline, this incredible order of things? For what can be found either in nature, than which nothing is more full of exquisite adaptations, or in the works of men's hands, so compounded, so compact, and so cemented and jointed together? What is there last, which does not agree with what is first; what is there that follows which does not answer to what went before? What one part is there not so interwoven with the other that by the mere moving of a letter, all the rest must fall? Nor, indeed, is there so much as a letter that can be moved; and then how grave, how magnificent, how constant became the very person of the Catholic? What consolations had they? What exhortations, yea, what admonitions and counsels written to the greatest men? All these qualities which the philosopher beautifully enumerates, as constituting the highest and noblest ideal of wisdom, were found united and infinitely extended here. Many good persons, I am aware, have never learned to see the admirable and glorious connection between their religion, and all that adds lustre and dignity to the

* Lib. de Præscript. 12.

present life of men, while others cannot be persuaded by any effort to look upon the beauty which they have betrayed; but, as a late writer remarks, even for those who do not comprehend all its most profound and exquisite relations, the Catholic view ought to appear, at least, as the grandest of all those that have ever illumined the human race. In every order of things, he observes, it has left a footstep, a giant trace, a trace which the world adores, and which future generations will never equal. In poesy it made a Dante, the Homer of soul, and of the world of spirits, as the other was for the world of bodies. In art it made a Michael Angelo, and we do not speak of that common herd of great men, that crowd of illustrious geniuses, mixed together like the luminous souls in the glorious garlands of Dante, each of whom would have graced a world. In the conduct of nations it produced those two names, which still, in spite of the aberration of ages, represent the poles on which European society revolves, Charlemagne and Gregory VII., and the third ideal in which the fusion of that double genius was realized—St. Louis—Gregory VII., Charlemagne, and St. Louis; and by them, the most beautiful social edifice that ever existed, the grandest, the most holy fœderation, that which comprised the greatest number of nations—that which was of all others the most fruitful in every kind of glory. The Greek fœderation scarcely lasted two centuries, and they were stormy and uncertain. The union of nations under the Roman despotism endured longer, but its end was more dishonourable, and more bloody. The Christian republic endured, at least, for ten centuries, and in spite of the decay of the principle, which gave it birth, nothing but a return to barbarism can wholly overthrow it.

Initiated by truth itself in all the secrets of man and of society, the Church has never had any but grand views; therefore, as often as proud mediocrity, fierce and haughty on the ground of its isolation, has attempted to measure by its own standard the vast conceptions of Catholicism, one has heard it proclaim as false and untenable the divine views, whose magnificent totality is only unveiled to those intelligences, which are enlightened by all the light of which the Church is the focus. This is what was to be expected. Where could the spirit of man, spirit partial in its nature, learn to know and to feel that which is grand, that which is Catholic? In describing the narrow circumference which is assigned to it, if its attention be arrested by a detail which

seems to it imperfect, it stops there, it declaims, it blasphemes, it remains eternally nailed to that spot; to leave it only one thing is wanting; to extend a little its regards, but this is to ask from it what is beyond its ability. Weakness, very excusable! if it were not in reality the fault of the heart. For our religion is admirable in this respect, that by it the man "of good will" placed on high, enjoys an horizon of which the extent can never be conceived by the man who wishes to be a rule unto himself. Happy prelude to that vision which is reserved for the clean of heart, in the abode of light, holy and eternal.

There remains but one characteristic of the Catholic philosophy, not as yet especially noticed, which may be denominated its generosity and ennobling influence. That the perfection of the mind is not opposed to that of the heart, is proved as we have seen by the writings of the holy fathers and the schoolmen; the effect of their philosophy is to dephlegmatize and to vivify. It formed no ice-hearted counsellors. "The tree of wisdom," says Hugo of St. Victor, "is only strong through love, it only becomes green through hope, which yields the joy that keeps the heart warm during the winter of this life."*

The language of the saints, with respect to the flames within their hearts, is well known. What astonishing things are recorded by faithful witnesses of St. Francis of Assisium, St. Theresa, Mary of Oegnia, Peter of Alcantara, and others? The heart of St. Catherine of Sienna glowed with such love, that she felt as if the common elementary fire was more cooling than warming.† "What is to be wise," asks Hugo of St. Victor,‡ "unless to love God? Love is wisdom." It would have been hard to convince this great luminary of the school, that hatred and mistrust were the best criterion of a vocation to philosophy, and that he was the best proficient who could repeat Satan's confession—only in destroying I find ease to my relentless thoughts. The peaceful loving character of Catholic wisdom gave all who possessed it an immense intellectual advantage, not only over the followers of the irreligious school in general, but also over those who advocated that system in particular, which rests on the supposed reformation of the doctrines of faith; for the protestor, who believes himself in

* De Arca Morali, iii. 7.

† Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii.

‡ In Eccles. Hom. xii. 149.

exclusive possession of pure truth, being necessarily pressed upon from both sides by what he terms Romanism and ultra Protestation, must in effect be like a pedagogue of the Elizabethan school—always teaching and always angry; and Cardan remarks that, “the pedagogue’s office is one of those, which, by their very nature produce folly, not only from the custom of teaching, but also from the habit of being made angry.”*

The Catholic wisdom, moreover, taught men what a dangerous thing it is to admit such dark spirits and phantoms as spring from suspicion into their soul: it warned them that the habit of mistrusting others would in time utterly drive out all truth, and love, and strength, and faith. Charity, while it prepared them for the worst, made them always believe and anticipate the best things. No frigid atmosphere came from them; for their hearts were kept inflamed by their intelligence; so that the monk Evagrus, showing the importance of continuing to explain to pagans the principles of religion, says, “at least, in approaching the torch to the eyes of the blind, if they do not see the light, they cannot avoid feeling its warmth.† To each student of the Catholic schools one might apply Plato’s expression, *ἐξημμένος ὑπὸ φιλοσοφίας ὥς περ πυρός*.‡

In fact, to the light which issued from them the universal world owed warmth and lustre. Thanks to its influence, there was no winter in the spiritual region, nor were souls ever cut off from each other and frost-bound by selfishness, but all were blended and fused everlastingly into one living whole by the breath of love. St. Thomas remarks, that the first angel sinning is termed cherubim, which is interpreted plenitude of science, and not seraphim, which is glowing, as if through charity.§ The spirits whom faith had renovated, though, as Dante saith, “wonderful for wisdom of cherubic light,” were yet still more admirable for meriting the title of seraphic; and this praise belongs not to the school alone, but also to those great men of the sixteenth century, who sought to reconcile the views of Plato and his old philosophy with the Catholic faith. When one reads the philosophic epistles of Marsilius Ficinus, or of Picus of Mirandula, the heart is inflamed, the intelligence cheered and invigorated—one feels more pious, more confiding, and the effect of such study

is to sweeten, to illumine, to sanctify the heart, and on the wings of their sublime contemplation the soul ascends to God. With what a noble sense of the dignity of the human intelligence does Ficinus encourage his disciple, saying to Antonio Faventino, “God himself will fight for religious philosophy, for piety—*Si ergo Deus pro nobis quis contra nos?*”*

In later times natural philosophers, by confiding their attention to the parts and mechanism of the external world, have learned to speak of the human race as forming but a very humble portion of the creation, because they consider in man only the anatomical organization of his body; but the views respecting the importance of the rational creature, entertained by the schoolmen, who kept their eyes fixed upon the spiritual grandeur, the divine privileges, and the eternal destinies of man, were very different. St. Anselm says “that all who live justly are angels of God;”† and John Scot Erigena expressed himself to the same effect, saying, “divine Scripture and reason prove that the human and the angelic natures are the same, or most similar.”‡ “Even we,” says St. Augustin, “in as much as we taste something eternal in our mind are not in this world.”§ “You are not sent,” says St. Bernard, “to behold the sun, moon, and stars, neither the firmament, nor the waters which are above the firmament. All these, although above you in place, are beneath you in dignity; they are bodies, but a part of you is spirit, superior to which you will search in vain for any thing which is not spirit.”||

The Catholic view might naturally suggest the words of Plato, that in determining the character of a real philosopher, we must remember that minuteness is most contrary to the soul, which is about to aspire to a conception of the whole of things divine and human; that there must be in the mind a certain quality of magnificence, and a perception of all time and of all essence, which will necessarily lead to a contempt for human life, and a conviction that there is nothing terrible in death.¶

“The sacred mysteries,” says Picus of Mirandula, “commemorate seraphin, cherubin, and thrones.” Than these we shall be no ways inferior if we wish; for let us observe what they do and how they exist, that by

* De Sapientia, Lib. x.

† Cur Deus Homo, ii. 8.

‡ De Divisione Naturæ, Lib. iv.

§ De Trin. 4. || De Consideratione, v. 3.

¶ De Repub. Lib. vi.

* De Sapientia, Lib. v.

† Apud Dacler. Spicileg. tom. x. 3.

‡ Plato, Epist. xii. § LXIV. art. 1.

doing the same, we may have an equal lot with them. Seraphin burns with the fire of charity—cherubin shines with the splendour of intelligence—thrones stand by the firmness of judgment: therefore, if we fulfil the duties of the active and inferior life according to justice, we shall be established with the solidity of thrones; if suspending action, meditating on the Creator in the things created, and on the things created in the Creator, we employ ourselves in contemplation, we shall shine on all sides with cherubic light; if in charity we desire only the Creator, we shall be inflamed with that fire which is devouring in the seraphic image.*

To these lofty views, of the dignity of our nature, all conceptions of its moral character corresponded, so that in the schools of faith, grandeur and virtue were shown inseparably combined. "True philosophy," says Novalis, "is suicidal—it destroys self; that is, the real beginning of all philosophy." This profound thinker then would admit to the fullest extent the claim of the scholastics to be true philosophers, for the result of mystic love, according to Dionysius and Hugo of St. Victor, is to expel man from himself, *expelli incipiat et exire etiam a se*. This, in fact, is the Catholic view, diametrically opposed, therefore, to the moral system of the Utilitarian writers, deriving its strength from the selfish passions of our nature. The ancient philosophers themselves had shown the folly of supposing that selfishness is the secret principle of human actions. Plato says, "that in love it is not what belongs to themselves, that men love as some have thought, unless, indeed, it be said that goodness belongs essentially to themselves, and that evil is something foreign to them, for it is nothing but goodness which men love and immortality."† Assuredly, it would have been difficult to persuade the schoolmen that the holiness without which no man shall see the Lord, could be compatible with the adoption of such a rule of life. "Utilitarian philosophy," says a distinguished living writer, "in destroying the dominion of the moral feelings, offends at once, both against the law of honour and the law of God. It rises not for an instant above the world, allows not the expansion of a single lofty sentiment; and its natural tendency is to harden the hearts and debase the moral practice of mankind."

The generous communicativeness which

characterised the spirit of the Catholic philosophy, breaks out in a curious passage of Richard of St. Victor, where he shows that the consummation of perfect goodness and love cannot be obtained without three persons. "Let it disturb or anger no one," saith he, "if for the more clear intelligence of truth we speak in a humane manner of things divine. We convert this kind of speech to our purpose, with the more confidence, as we find it frequently in the holy Scriptures. The highest degree of goodness seems to be when the highest love is directed to that where nothing will be wanting to the fulness of its felicity. But this highest degree of perfection cannot be found between two persons only; for though each of these without doubt would draw the delights of love from the other, yet greatly is this joy increased to both when there is a third person to whom they can exhibit their love, and communicate their surpassing delights. For there would be something wanting to the sweetness of the two, if there were not a third to whom they could impart a communion in their love. Therefore, without a completion of the Trinity, there could not be the consummation of perfect goodness."*

But we must conclude this chapter. In general the Catholic view verifies the remark of Richard of St. Victor, "that in proportion as the heart of man is delighted in admiration of the wisdom of God, it is expanded to the conception of more and greater things,"† that was in fact its godlike recompence.

The writings of St. Thomas, the great representative of Catholic philosophy, might be adduced in evidence, as exhibiting all the characteristics which we have ascribed to it. For, say those who have made his shining volumes their constant study, his philosophy is angelic. It is "*sicut angeli*," according to Clement the Eighth, whose brief begins with those words;—it explains all things on the earth, seeing effects in causes, and causes in effects:—it is holy, for as Pope Clement the Sixth says, "From the writings of his wisdom and learning the universal church, collecting the fruit of spiritual abundance, is continually refreshed:—it is sublime and beautiful, clear and in order, so that a learned theologian says, "After the sum of Thomas nothing remains but the light of glory—*Neque aliud superest nisi lumen gloriæ post summum Thomæ*:"—it contains universal truth, so that Labbæus

* Joan. Pic. Mirand. de Hominum Dignitate.

† Conviv.

* De Trinitate, Pars I. Lib. iii. c. 18, 14.

† Allegoriæ Tabernaculi Fœd.

says, "He who understands Thomas hath learned all things, yet doth not he who hath learned all things understand the whole of Thomas ;"—and it is so capable of being applied to the purposes of truth, that the celebrated Jerome Casanato says, "if every one were agreed to follow the principles of St. Thomas there would be no heresies in the world, no relaxation of morality which rules the consciences of men, and no wan-

dering or illusion in mystic theology which prepares the way for holiness."*

Such were the views not of one individual but of the ages of faith in general ; for nothing singular can be detected in the wisdom of this great glory of the schools. The same character belonged to each one whose eyes were fast fixed on the eternal wheels, though with equal radiance the supreme light showered not over all.

CHAPTER XI.

IN divine speculation, the philosophers of the ages of faith considered man to be well in a twofold manner ;—first, common and human ; the second, excellent and perfect.—The first, say they, is when by intellectual virtues and sciences, by physics, and especially metaphysics, which teach him to consider divine properties from creatures, the intelligence is illuminated by God so as to believe in his existence and to see that virtue is preferable, which is to know God from the properties of creatures ; but the second is excellent and perfect by beatitude, which is cleanness of heart, by which the human mind is joined to God so as to be immeasurably illuminated concerning occult and divine things. Of this beatitude, the influence upon the race of men in ages of faith has already been considered, in relation to the study and incidental results of moral and intellectual purity commencing with the heart. It remains to observe the direct evidence of history, with respect to the reward of such purity, as far as it could be inherited in the present life. "Now," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "the reward is greater than that of the preceding beatitudes. The one God, immense, eternal, immortal, incorruptible, and incomprehensible, is ineffable by word, uncircumscribable by place, interminable by time, conquering and super-exceeding all our intelligence, and spiritual and corporeal vision : He dwells in light inaccessible. What is this promise then of

the Saviour? Is a heart of flesh fit for this vision? To the spiritual substance of our soul, for a time united to a body, and to be separated from it hereafter either penally or happily, the Saviour prescribes this spiritual cleanness before the divine vision. To such a heart a triple vision of God is promised, first by nature, secondly by grace, thirdly by glory." "In the wall of ignorance," says Alanus de Insulis, "which separates us from God, there are four windows—for God can be known by creatures, he can be known by reason, he can be known by divine inspiration, and he can be known by the divine Scriptures—but these windows are often darkened, when the Creator is not read in creatures, when reason is made the handmaid to sensuality, when man is deserted by grace, and when the sacred Scripture is despised."† This passage will serve to direct our steps through the remainder of the present book : for we shall consider in what manner those who had attained to purity beheld God in creatures, in what appeared a deviation from the general laws by which the visible world is sustained, in the order of human life, in the records of men during the darkness of paganism, in the holy Scriptures, in the mysteries of faith, in the adorable Eucharist, and in the mystic union of their souls with his divine nature.

That the vision of God by nature was

* Epist. Encic. R. P. Anton. Cloche.

† De Penitentia.

sought for by the ancient philosophers, appears from many passages of their writings, and St. Bernardine of Sienna says, that it was in some measure imparted to them by creatures, for man has natural reason by which he can know God, as the lamb by natural instinct knows its mother.* Let us hear Plato.—“ Even that beauty of person, which seems so worthy of love, should lead men to love all beauty, and not to confine their affection to the beauty of one person which so quickly perishes, but rather to despise any single and detached instance. Afterwards we should esteem the beauty which is in the soul as far more worthy than that of the body, and this is what we should still more love. Thence we should proceed to discern the beauty which belongs to the objects of intelligence, and so, in fine, instead of being arrested by the beauty of some one person or some one sentiment, we shall learn to direct our view to the great sea of beauty, where, contemplating many beautiful and glorious sayings, we shall be strengthened, and enabled to produce corresponding sentiments, and arrive at beholding that one knowledge, as that one beauty. And then, O Socrates, there will be a wondrous vision, when we behold that beauty of essence for the sake of which, formerly, all labours had been endured! which, in the first place, always exists, and does not perish and again come into being, neither increasing nor diminishing; again, which is not beautiful in one part and vile in another, or beautiful then but not now, or beautiful in one respect but vile in another, or beautiful in that place but vile in this, or beautiful to some but vile to others; which will appear beautiful, not as a face, or hands, or any other body, not as some one discourse, or some one object of intelligence, or as any thing which exists in some one or other being, whether in an animal, or in the earth, or in the heavens; but that which is in itself, that one single essence from which all things derive whatever degree of beauty they possess, which is never either greater or less, and which can never suffer change—then we shall, at length, learn to know what is beauty, and then, if any where, man may truly live beholding it. For, since such is the power of this imperfect and partial beauty which exists in creatures, that you are always ready to forego eating and drinking provided you might always associate with those who possess it and behold them, what, think you, will be the enjoyment of

those who can behold clearly that pure unmixed beauty, not polluted with flesh, and human colours, and other such dross, but that divine essence of all beauty.”*

He insists upon pursuing the study of the sciences with the same intention and for the same end: thus, with geometry, he says, it is necessary to examine whether it tend to enable the mind to see more clearly the ideal of good; but that it does tend to this is evident, inasmuch as it compels the soul to turn to that place in which is the greatest happiness of essence, which it is necessary in every manner to behold. If it compel us to look on that, it is a fitting study, but if it lead us to look only on what is generated and corruptible it is useless. How conformable to the prayer offered up in ages of faith, not by a few philosophers only, but by the whole multitude, when every tongue repeated, “ Deliver me from setting my heart upon any of thy creatures which may divert my eyes from a continual looking up to thee.”

But let us hear the continuation of the philosopher's discourse.

“ What is not unimportant, though difficult for others to believe, in each of these branches of learning, that is, in studying the science of numbers, and geometry, and astronomy, a certain organ of the soul is purified and reanimated, which perishes and is rendered blind by other pursuits, though it would be better to save that organ than a thousand eyes. For it is only by this that truth is seen:” *Κρείττον δὲ σωθῆναι μυρίων ὀφθαλμῶν, μόνον γὰρ αὐτῷ ἀλήθεια ὁράται.* The advantage ascribed to the study of astronomy may be admitted, if we are convinced that it compels the soul to look upwards, and leads it from things here below; but, on the other hand, it may be objected, that the very objects which this presents before the eyes may be an impediment to the real end of looking upwards; “for I do not think that any kind of instruction can make the soul look upwards, excepting that which is concerning the Primal Being, and the invisible: *περὶ τὸ δὲ ὅν τε ἡ καὶ τὸ ἀόρατον.*”†

Nor were these views confined to Plato: Aristotle described the predominant thought or feeling of Xenophanes, by saying that he gazed upon the whole heaven and said that the one Being was the Deity. All such passages, however, may be adduced rather as illustrations of the views of men in ages long subsequent, than as furnishing ground for exalting the merits of the heathen sages.

* Serm. X.

* Conviv. cap. 29. † De Repub. Lib. vii.

It may not be necessary to impute unphilosophical motives of vanity or ambition to the early inquirers of Greece: however admirable may have been their views, as respected themselves and a few choice disciples, the testimony of the Apostle is conclusive against them. If they knew God they glorified him not as God, but left the multitude to perish in the darkness of their idolatrous worship.

Albert the Great says, in general, that "there is this difference between the contemplation of Catholics and of the Gentile philosophers; that the contemplation of the latter is on account of the perfection of him who contemplates, and, therefore, rests in intellect, and so their end is in this knowledge of the intellect; but the contemplation of the saints, that is, of Catholics, is on account of the love of God, who is the object of their contemplation; therefore, it does not rest in the intellect by knowledge, but passes to affection by love."*

Let us then resume our view of the Christian philosophy, and observe how the clean of heart beheld God in creatures.

St. Augustin, in his book of Retractions, acknowledges his former error, imputing total blindness to the unconverted, and says, "I do not approve of what I uttered in prayer, 'O thou who hast wished that none but the pure should know truth,' for it can be answered, that many who are not pure nevertheless know many truths." It was something very different from a natural faculty of acute perception, that distinguished the clean of heart. Satan, in the middle ages, was regarded as surpassing, above all things, in the capacity of logician; and Plato had remarked that men of narrow minds, addicted to evil, have a most singular sharpness of discernment.—"Have you never observed," he asks, "in men that are called bad, but skilful and wise, how acute is the perception of their little soul, *ὡς δρᾶν μὲν βλέπει τὸ ψυχρόν*,—how clearly it sees all the objects to which it turns itself—what a piercing sight it possesses, but compelled to minister to evil? So by how much more clearly it can see, by so much the more is it capable of doing evil."† This extraordinary acuteness, or perhaps, this diabolic cunning, is very different from the faculty of the pure, which enables them to behold truth. The vision of God, even in creatures, is ascribed by the schoolmen to a good will, assisted and directed by the illumination of divine

grace; and therefore Richard of St. Victor exclaims, "*Felix cui visibilium scientia fit scala ad invisibilia cognoscenda.*"* Happy then were the scholastic and mystic philosophers, the literate and the illiterate in ages of faith; for these men, like the angels, as Nieremberg observes, always beheld the face of their Father, who is in heaven.† The great contemplatist and poet accordingly, on meeting them in paradise, perceives this to be their grand characteristic; for thus he sums up their intellectual excellence,—

"——— all these, on one sole mark,
Their love and vision fixed."

"What is the form of visible things," asks Richard of St. Victor, "unless a certain picture of things invisible."‡ "*Omnis natura Deum loquitur,*" says Hugo of St. Victor, "*omnis natura hominem docet.*"§ Again, in another place he says, "There is nothing in the universe which has not some participation in the highest good, and which, therefore, may not conveniently represent its image and similitude."|| Accordingly we find that this great doctor shows a Socratic boldness in naming the lowest and most familiar things, for nothing was contemptible in his eyes. All spoke to him of God; for he could even feel with Shakspeare, that "there is some soul of goodness in things evil, would men observingly distil it out." Through all his writings there is a great abundant religious contemplation of nature. With deep living feeling he speaks of seeking, finding, and understanding God in nature. This whole visible world is, to him, like a book written with God's hand, and in the beauty of creatures is revealed to them that highest, everlasting, mysterious, and ineffable beauty.¶ Albert the Great sees God in every art; "for nothing," he says, "can subsist of its own virtue, or act, unless in virtue of God, the first moving power and first principle, who is the cause of every agent."** "Ubi est Deus tuus?" say the impious, "O ignorantia cæca," continues St. Bernardine of Sienna, "nescire ubi est ille qui ubique est."†† These men beheld God in the sublime faculties of the human intelligence,

* Ric. S. Vict. de exterminatione mali et promotione boni, p. i. Tract. iii. 16.

† Doct. Ascet. Lib. iv. p. iv. c. 34.

‡ De Contemplatione, p. ii. Lib. ii. c. 18.

§ Erudit. Didascalice, Lib. vi. c. 5.

|| Lib. Exposit. in Cælest. Hierarch. c. ii.

¶ De tribus diebus, or de Trinitatis per visibilia agnitione

** De Adhær. Deo, c. 16. †† Serm vii.

* Albert. Mag. de Adhær. Deo. cap. 9.

† De Repub. Lib. vii.

but no less also in the smiles of infancy; for when they saw a child delighted, and as if frantic for love and admiration over some lifeless toy, they could discern at such hours angels gathered about the little creature sporting lovingly around it, and they could see proof in that instructive extacy that God himself was near. The fond play of a child, therefore, leads Dante to contemplate the felicity of heaven; for thus he sings—

Forth from his plastic hand, who charm'd beholds
Her image, ere she yet exist, the soul
Comes like a babe, that wantons sportively,
Weeping and laughing in its wayward moods;
As artless and as ignorant of aught
Save that her Maker being one who dwells
With gladness ever, willingly she turns
To whate'er yields her joy.*

Men of mystic illumination beheld and adored God, even in the sufferings which they underwent in conformity to the decree of his Providence, or the order of nature. The seraphic father, on his bed of death, composed the last strophe of his song of the sun as follows:—"Praised be my Lord for our sister corporal death, from which no man living can escape: woe to him who dies in mortal sin! Blessed are those who repose in thy holy will. The second death shall not be able to hurt them. Praise and bless my Lord, return him thanks, and serve him with great humility."

"Although," says St. Augustin, "that eternal and incommutable nature which is God, dwelling in himself, as it is said with Moses, *Ego sum qui sum*, be far different from all created things; although that substance is ineffable, nor can be disclosed to man by man, unless by means of certain arbitrary words of time and place, since he is before all time and beyond all place; nevertheless, 'He who hath made us is nearer to us than many things, which are made. For in Him we live and move and exist, but many of these are removed far from our minds through the dissimilitude of their nature, since they are corporeal.' Whence it is that to discover them greater labour is necessary, than to find Him by whom they were made, while it is better, to a degree of incomparable felicity, to discern Him in the least particle, with a pious mind, than to comprehend all these universal things. Therefore, rightly these inquisitors of this world are blamed in the book of wisdom. 'Si enim tan-

tum,' it says, '*potuerunt valere, ut possent æstinare sæculum, quomodo ejus Dominum non facilius invenerunt?*' For the foundations of the earth are unknown to our eyes, and he who founded the earth approaches near to our minds."*

The philosophers of the middle ages evidently felt what is so beautifully expressed by Novalis, that man stands with the visible word in as various and incomprehensible relations as with his fellow men; that as it shows itself childlike to the child, and bends itself condescendingly to his childish heart, so does it appear godlike to divine men, and sound in harmony with the highest spirit.† "It was their passion," as a poet saith, "nature's low tones and harmonies to hear—heard by the calm alone." To these tones, to these harmonic sympathies pervading the universe, we find repeated allusion in the lives of the saints, whose hearing was a communication not alone between soul and soul, but also between soul and things of which we know nothing or but little.‡ Hence, in their books are continually occurring sentiments, which poets borrow, as when they say,

In lonely glens, amid the roar of rivers,
Where the dim nights were moonless, have I
known
Joys which no tongue can tell:—

Mary of Oignys used to retire from all observation, and escape into the fields and woods, and the whole day would elapse before she could be found again. We read of many holy persons, that they used to repair by night to solitary places, so that the poet does but echo what they felt when saying,

To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars, and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim:
Or to look, listening, on the scattered leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song,
These were my pastimes, and to be alone.

We have observed before, how dear to them was the spectacle of this beautiful world, how theirs were all the hues of heaven, sights and sounds of day's rise and decline. "Who can speak," says St. Augustin, "of all the beauties and treasures of the earth, and sea, and sky, that opaque shade of woods, the colour and odour of

* De Genesi ad Litteram, Lib. v. 34.

† Schriften, ii. 75.

‡ Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 95.

* Purg. xvi.

flowers, the diversity of painted and singing birds, the multitude of admirable creatures, the changing hues of the ocean which clothes itself with different colours, as with a garment, that bland temperance of the air? And all these things are the consolations of the miserable and condemned, not the rewards of the blessed. What then will these be, if such be the former? Quid dabit eis quos prædestinavit ad vitam, qui hæc dedit etiam eis quos prædestinavit ad mortem?*

It was the old Catholic thought therefore, which a later poet has expressed when saying,

"If God has so arrayed

A fading world, that quickly passes by,
Such rich provision of delight has made
For every human eye.

What shall the eyes that wait for him survey,
Where his own presence gloriously appears
In worlds that were not founded for a day,
But for eternal years?"

"O my God, O sweet life of my soul!" it is Louis of Blois who speaks, "O my true health, O my only and eternal good, what do I wish? What do I seek but thee? Have I not all things if I have thee who didst create all things? Nothing is dear to me which thou didst not make. Behold, the beauty of the blessed angels, the beauty of holy souls, the beauty of human bodies, the beauty of brute animals, the beauty of the heavens, of the stars, of the earth, of plants, flowers, gems, metals, and all colours, the sweetness of sounds, of tastes, and of all delights, all proceed from thee, whatever of beauty, grace, gentleness, elegance, sweetness, virtue, and dignity exists in creatures, all flows from thee."†

Then elsewhere alluding to the vision of God hereafter, he says, "if the spectacle of these visible heavens, if the sparkling lustre of the stars, the radiant splendour of the sun, the pale illumination of the moon, the brilliant light of day, if this spectacle be so ravishing, if it be so sweet to contemplate the elegant clothing and the engaging colours of the birds, and plants, and flowers, if the song of the nightingale and the lark, if the melody of instruments have such charms for us, if one inhales with such delight the odorous air embalmed with roses and lilies, with aromatic plants and rich perfumes, if

the savour of the various fruits be so agreeable to the taste; if, I say, all these things procure for us such lively enjoyment, with what a torrent of delight will not our soul be inundated when it shall contemplate without a cloud that infinite beauty, when it shall taste that ineffable sweetness whence flow all the beauty and all the sweetness of creatures."* Therefore, if at any time discouragement and grief arose from the thought of being obliged, as the poet says,

"To leave unseen so many a glorious sight,
To leave so many lands unvisited,
To leave so many worthiest books unread,
Unrealized so many visions bright."

Instead of exclaiming O! wretched, yet inevitable spite, the soul was hushed and vain regrets were stilled, with the remembrance that all would be found in God. "Nothing is lost," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "that is loved in God, since in Him all things are saved to us."† How charming then is this first vision! Ah, those morning walks through fairest bowers of Italian shore—those mountain walks o'er moor and snowy alp—those friends and comrades of our elastic youth—those enchanting moments of inhaling the sweetest loveliness of nature! Where are they? Who will give them back to us? At times men believe they are returning, but they mistake memory for hope. They are gone; yet not for ever perished. He who gave them can restore them; they were in his mind before we existed, and they will exist there, when we shall have removed hence. Ah, in heaven, we may have again those early walks, fresher than ever the balmy breath of incense-breathing morn yielded on this earth! In heaven we may have them all again—lakes, woods, mountains, and Ausonian skies, in angels ever bright and fair—the friends and comrades of our youth!

"He alone never loseth what is dear to him," says St. Augustin, "to whom all things are dear in Him, who is never lost." Such was the great secret of Catholic generations in ages of faith.

O fortunati quibus est fortuna peracta
Jam sua, nos alia ex aliis in fata vocamur.

"We, miserable," exclaims Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Lorenzo de Medici,

* Lodovic Blos. Instit. Spirit. cap. 5.
† Serm. vii.

* De Civ. Dei, xxii. 24.

† Lodovic Blos. Enchirid. Parvulorum, Lib. ii. cap. 7.

"are always following the Italy which flies, whereas of necessity he alone can rightly follow Italy, and happily obtain it, who follows not that which flies, but that which remains. Remain, therefore, happy, my Lorenzo, in the love of God, who remains for ever.* "In eternal felicity," as St. Augustin says, "there will be present whatever will be loved, nor will any thing be desired but what will be present. Every thing there will be good, and the supreme God will be the supreme good, and he will be present for the enjoyment of those who love him; and what above all is most blessed, it will be certain that so it will be for ever."†

You perceive, reader, how different is the vision of God to the clean of heart, from the scientific discernment of his power by the observer of creation. From the contemplations of a mere naturalist, the mind often draws melancholy, because, whatever food may be derived for vanity, the spectacle of his operations, without the constant and steady light of faith, leaves the heart cold, comfortless, and hollow; but the poor hermit in his forest shade sees God with simple eyes, yet with unmixed delight; though he may not be able to discover all the purposes of utility which the worm answers, he never passes him by with disgust. As he sits under some aged oak, he watches the dark earth, and each creeping thing reminds him of his Creator. Come, let us observe him seated in the deep wood—see how he follows with his eyes the least creature at his feet; at one time it is, perhaps, a golden beetle carrying homeward something for its young—at another, a red spider, and then a spider striped like a zebra, and then an ant, heavily laden; and, observe how he praises aloud the mercy which is upon all flesh, the goodness which breathes life and happiness around him.

He repeats the words of Hugo of St. Victor, "as the soul is in all parts of the body constituting its life, so God is essentially in every creature, preserving it from annihilation, though how or in what manner I know not."‡ Mysticism in the desert is the title of one chapter in the beautiful work of Goerres, in which he shows the great St. Antony, and the holy fathers around him, studying the nature of created

things, as a book containing the word of God.* Nor was this book neglected in the middle ages. It was while wandering on the banks of the Po, near Mantua, that Osanna Andreasi saw an angel, and heard those voices of all creatures and elements, singing, "Love God all ye who dwell upon the earth."†

In numberless places we find attested in the lives of saints, the fact of a mystic sympathy between their souls and all parts of creation, trees and plants, birds, and beasts, and insects. Blessed St. Francis, who used to speak to all created things, as if they had intelligence, loved to recognise in their various properties some trace of the divine perfections. His sermons to the birds, and those of St. Anthony of Padua to the fish, cannot be read without an intimate conviction of one's own comparative blindness and insensibility to the relations and harmonies of nature. In all ages this was a study which could draw the holy recluses into the woods; for as St. Theresa says, "as the labour of the bee does not prevent it from leaving its hive to search through different flowers, the matter for its work, so the study of one's self does not prevent the soul from sometimes taking its flight to consider the goodness and majesty of God, in the perfection of his creatures."

Thus walking in a trance of loving care,
They saw and felt the beauty shed around,
The blue above, the music in the air,
The flowers upon the ground.

"Love," says the ascetic contemplatist, "makes the circuit of heaven and earth, sea and land, and refers all things which it sees and hears in creatures to the glory of the Creator; for there is nothing so little or vile in the nature of things in which may not be seen the goodness of the Supreme Being, his work in accomplishing, his power in creating, his wisdom in disposing, and his providence in rightly governing all things. This consideration causes the devout mind to praise God in all places and at all times, to exult, and to be glad."‡ The blessed clean of heart were the true students of nature: to them the visible world seemed a garden of roses, and a valley of lilies; so conversant were they with such sweets, that the very titles of their books are borrowed from

* Mars. Fic. Epist. Lib. iii.

† Trinit. cap. vii.

‡ Annot. Elucid. Evang. Joan.

* Die Christliche Mystik, i. 178.

† Goerres, Christliche Mystik, i. 331.

‡ Thom. à Kempis, Horlatus Rosarum, 13.

the flowers of a garden. "If your heart be right," says the ascetic guide, "then every creature is a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine." Having become like children, it was as if all that our first parents drew down upon themselves by disobedience, had been cast off from them. They walked again, as in Paradise; and the Lord came forward, as he did then in the youthful age of the world, to meet the transfigured man.

Yes, it was for such hearts, inflamed with the love of God, that natural philosophy had, indeed, charms. Each one might have employed the poet's words, and in a sense peculiarly his own, have said,

The current, when his fair course is not hindered,
Makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage,
And so by many winding nooks he strays
With willing course :—
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
And make a pastime of each weary step,
Till the last step have brought me to my love.

That the philosophy of the middle ages should have tended to the extension of these religious, rather than to the encouragement of merely scientific views of nature, can form no ground of reasonable objection to any one who reflects upon its character in other respects, and who admits that it is not unphilosophical to be consistent. What secures for the modern system in general the accession of many illustrious names, is the opinion that the inductive sciences constitute the only true philosophy, and that these did not commence until the decline of faith. A universal excitement in the minds of men to pursue natural philosophy was, undoubtedly, one result of the religious revolution; for from causes already noticed, physical reasoning had been neglected, and "it seemed," says a great philosopher of our times, "as if the genius of mankind, long pent up, had at length rushed eagerly upon nature, and commenced with one accord the great work of turning up her hitherto unbroken soil, and exposing her treasures." Certainly, there was sufficient proof at that time of a great commencing change in the direction of the human faculties; and upon the whole no one can question but that the identifying of all philosophy with a steady uninterrupted application to scientific pursuits, which has produced what the same illustrious philosopher terms "this happy and desirable state of things," may be justly ascribed to the founders of a new theology,

whose principles were quite adequate to give a totally different direction to the human mind, from what it had been receiving during sixteen centuries, and to produce a state of society, in which truths of a different order would be regarded as of the first importance, while those which had before engrossed the world would be consigned to men of inferior capacity, as not being worth the attention of real philosophers. But when all this is admitted, much remains to be proved, before arriving at the conclusion which so many draw, that the philosophy of the middle ages was contemptible, and that those who pursued it, preferring to see God in creatures to fixing their eyes on his material works, were men totally void of any genuine principle conducive to wisdom. We have already seen how far the theological element entered into all views of philosophy with the ancients, and it may assuredly be a question whether they would have approved of the view of philosophy adopted by their professed admirers in subsequent times.

The lessons of Pythagoras were certainly not confined to particular branches of mathematics, or physical science, but were clearly meant to throw the fullest light on the greatest questions which can occupy the human mind.* Cicero, in extolling the excellence of the earlier Romans, appeals to qualities which no one would now presume to mention in any assembly, when discourse turned on philosophy, "*quæ enim tanta gravitas,*" he says, "*quæ tanta constantia, magnitudo animi, probitas, fides, quæ tam excellens in omni genere virtus in ullis fuit, ut sit cum majoribus nostris comparanda?*" Evidently he would have termed such not a barbarous and melancholy epoch, but rather "a happy and desirable state of things." Yet there is no mention of a progress in science, but on the contrary he proceeds to say that philosophy was then unknown. "Philosophia jacuit usque ad hanc ætatem."† Let us hear the wisest of the Greeks: "O Cebes, when I was young, it was wonderful how greatly I desired to acquire that wisdom which relates to natural history; for it seemed to me to be a proud thing to know the causes of each physical phenomenon, to discover its origin and its end, and why it perishes; and oftentimes I turned myself up and down, examining such things, and endeavouring to discover whether it was from the blood that we had

* Thirlwall, Hist. of Greece. † Tuscul. i. 1.

the faculty of thinking, or from the air, or from fire, or from none of these things, but from the brain, which afforded us the power of hearing and seeing; and again examining the causes of destruction, and the things in the heavens, and those of the earth, at last, I came to the conclusion, that I was not qualified by nature for such investigations. For in the first place I found that this study only rendered me more conscious of ignorance, and that it deprived me of much that I had before known. It seemed then to me afterwards when I had examined the essence of things, that it would be necessary to take care lest I should suffer what those persons experience, who look stedfastly at the sun; for sometimes they lose their eyes, unless they look at its reflection in water, or through some other medium. This, then, I understood, and I fear, lest, altogether I should blind my soul by looking at things with my eyes, and endeavouring to touch each of them. Therefore, it seemed to me to be necessary to take refuge in words, and in them to look at the truth of things, setting out on the principle of there being something beautiful and good, and great in itself, and from that proceeding to demonstrate that the soul is immortal.* His prayer seems thus to have been that of Solomon, "Animo irreverenti ne tradas me Domine," and his experience and conclusion similar, "Proposui in animo meo quærere et investigare sapienter de omnibus quæ fiunt sub sole. Hanc occupationem pessimam dedit Deus filiis hominum ut occuparentur in ea."†

Many of the fathers had revived, in a still more peremptory form, the opinion of Socrates, that the only valuable philosophy is that which teaches us our moral duties and religious hopes.‡ "Thus," Eusebius says, "it is not through ignorance of the things admired by them, but through contempt of their useless labour, that we think little of these matters, turning our souls to the exercise of better things." St. Augustin, after quoting the celebrated lines in Virgil's second Georgic, remarks, that Christians do not think it a source of happiness to know the causes of the great physical movements of the world, of the tides and the elements; but that they count him only happy who acquires the knowledge which serves to deliver him from moral error, that would endanger his

salvation.* St. Clement of Alexandria also shows the evil of continuing to rest in a mere secular instruction; "for some," he says, "enticed by the philtres of hand-maidens, neglect their mistress philosophy, and grow old, some in music, others in geometry, others in grammar, and the greatest part in rhetoric. But, he continues, as the vulgar sciences are intended to wait upon philosophy, their mistress, so also philosophy itself must wait upon the possession of wisdom; for philosophy is a study, a discipline, but wisdom is the knowledge of things divine and human, and their causes. Wisdom, therefore, has superiority over philosophy, as the latter has over elementary instruction."†

Such were the views of philosophers in the middle ages. "If you wish to be wise," says Peter the Venerable, "do not boast in the loquacity of logic, or the curiosity of physics, or in the knowledge of any thing but of Jesus Christ and him crucified."‡ "Philosophy and learned study," says Melchior Canus, "cannot afford happiness, for they yield to a thousand and the vilest things. They must necessarily be confined to a few. They increase not the rest but the labour of man; they do not satisfy, but excite our desires. Humana quippe mens quamdiu hic vivitur, rerum cognitione torqueri potest, satiari non potest."§ Their deep conviction might have been expressed in Dante's words:

"Well I discern, that by that truth alone
Enlightened, beyond which no truth may roam,
Our mind can satisfy her thirst to know."||

The schoolmen and philosophers of ages of faith, therefore, instead of being employed with one accord in the great work of turning up the soil of nature, and exposing her treasures, were united in the task of evangelizing the nations, preaching, illustrating, defending, and confirming the truths relating to the soul, and the worship of God, and the future destinies of man. But are they on that account to be set down as void of any principle of genuine philosophy, and deserving only reproach? Would there not be much more solid ground for condemning those who would confine philosophy to the physical and geometrical sciences, which Bossuet styles

* Plato, *Phædo*. 99.

† Brucker, iii. 317.

‡ Eccles.

* Enochirid. cap. v.

† Stromat. Lib. I. cap. 5.

‡ S. Pet. Ven. Ab. Clun. Epist. Lib. i. 9.

§ De Locis Theolog. Lib. ix. c. 9.

|| Par. IV.

the "vain pasture of curious and weak minds, because they nourish pride at little expense of mind, and demand from the passions no sacrifice." "Physic," says Lord Bacon, "carrieth men in narrow and restrained ways, subject to many accidents of impediments;" but *latæ undique sunt sapientibus viæ*; and Solomon elegantly describes this saying, "when thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shall not stumble." Chemistry, mathematics, sciences of destruction and of abstraction, did not so engross the attention of men as to leave them without solicitude for the philosophy of life, which seemed of infinitely greater importance, when "by the balance of experience it was found that the astronomer looking to the stars might fall into a ditch, that the inquiring philosopher might be blind in himself, and that the mathematician might draw forth a straight line with a crooked heart." However, it must not be inferred from hearing the declamations of Lactantius,* that the Church in general discommended the study of natural philosophy, and that the schoolmen deemed it empty and false. The latter never spoke with disrespect of science. Sir William Temple was not of their college, who says, "as to that part of philosophy which is called natural, I know no end it can have, but that of either busying a man's brains to no purpose, or satisfying the vanity so natural to most men, of distinguishing themselves, by some way or other, from those that seem their equals in birth and the common advantages of it. More than this, I know no advantage mankind has gained by the progress of natural philosophy, during so many ages it has had vogue in the world, excepting always what we owe to mathematics."† The schoolmen, indeed, along with all the devout people in ages of faith, daily besought God, in the words of David, to teach them goodness and discipline, as well as science.‡ But it is in later times that metaphysicians have been found to utter words of discouragement to check the ardour for scientific inquiry. At the same time what persuasion on their tongue, when saying with Malebranche, "men are not born to become astronomers or chemists, to pass all their lives hanging over a telescope or a crucible, to draw from their labours consequences of no very great importance. Let

their efforts be crowned with ever such complete success, they may have gained reputation in the world, but are they wiser or happier?"* Alas! one can read the answer to the latter question in the looks of philosophers. Mark that subtle mechanician who journeys from the valleys of the Jura to the cities of Constantine, and the farthest capitals of the west, to exhibit his wondrous fabric, in which images of birds fly round miniature magicians, who shake their cups, performing feats of secret art, while sweetest music warbles from the little temple. Do you not observe how unmoved, dark, and mournful he stands, looking on vacancy, evincing by his countenance how little his heart partakes in the rapture of the astonished gazers, who behold for the first time the work on which twenty years of his life have been consumed? So much for their happiness; but are they wiser?

An illustrious philosopher of modern times has remarked, that the mathematicians who have only deduced from the principles of the great original discoverers of the laws of nature, who have taken for granted those primary laws, and only worked out from them, who so often have been irreligious men, careless or deniers of a Creator, possessed in reality no peculiar privileges or advantages, that their errors are no more worthy of notice than those of common men, and that from the deductive habits of their mind, we have no reason to expect any other result.†

"By a too exclusive devotion to the pursuit of natural truth," another eminent Professor observes, "the higher intellectual powers may be cramped; for in the pursuit of any subject, however lofty, a man may become narrow-minded, and in a condition little better than that of moral servitude."‡

Before the rise of the new opinions the genius of mankind had been directed towards nature's God, as chiefly manifested by revelation, and, therefore, as the scientific knowledge of material things was not the paramount and ultimate object of pursuit, there was neglect in their investigation. In ages of faith men were aware that this was so. "One does not find," says Malebranche, "that Jesus Christ and his apostles wished to remove certain errors from men, which Monsieur Descartes has

* Whewell, *Hist. of Induct. Science*, i. 253.

† Essays. ‡ At Tierce.

• *Recherche de la Vérité*, Preface.

† Whewell, *Treatise on Astronomy*.

‡ Sedgwick, *Address to Geolog. Society*, London, 1831.

detected;" but what then? Can we condemn them for concluding with the same philosopher, in the words which terminate his great work on the Search of Truth, that, after all, "it is much better as good men to pass some years in ignorance of certain things, and find ourselves in a moment enlightened for ever, than to acquire by natural ways, with much application and pain, a very imperfect science, which leaves us in darkness for all eternity?"

It is an error to suppose that the barbarians, on their invasion of the Roman empire, in the fifth century, interrupted the progress of the sciences. They had ceased to be cultivated with any general application since the second century; and Baron Cuvier remarks, that this was a necessary consequence of the rise of the Christian religion, which had diverted the minds of great men to the contemplation of things divine, and quite of a different order from those which occupy the attention of the natural philosopher. He says, that it was not till the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century that the cultivation of natural philosophy revived, on the decline of the religious spirit which had prevailed in the middle ages. From this proposition, however, and its proof, it can never be concluded that in any age the philosophy of the school was hostile to the great and interesting investigations of natural science. The holy fathers, notwithstanding the bursts of declamatory eloquence in which some of them indulged, held a very different language." St. Clement of Alexandria, showing the importance of philosophical study, remarks, that Abraham had occasion to evince his knowledge both in astronomy and arithmetic.* "Some," he observes, "thinking to be ingenuous, make no account of philosophy, neither of dialectics, nor of natural sciences, but desire only faith; but as in husbandry and in medicine he who has the greatest variety of knowledge is better able to excel in those arts, so also every kind of instruction conduces to serve truth; and whether it be in geometry or music, grammar or philosophy, assists us to guard our faith."† Such was the universal sentiment throughout the middle ages. "If true devotion," says Richard of St. Victor, "can convert to some use of virtue the very sciences, which are, without doubt, perverse, what

is to be thought of those which can be useful and good."* The schoolmen, in one sense, accepted of Michael Scot's definition of philosophy, who says, that it is the knowledge of every thing;‡ but then they added, with Henry of Ghent, "all human sciences are ordained to the end of human life, which is the clear vision of God hereafter."§ "It is certain," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that all natural arts and sciences serve divine wisdom, and that the inferior, rightly ordered, can conduce to the higher wisdom."§ Accordingly, in all the great encyclopedical works of the middle age, the study of the sciences is shown to be subservient to theology, as may be witnessed in the vast collection known under the title of the *Vocabularium Salomonis*, by the monks of St. Gall, in the ninth or tenth century, in which the terms and object of all branches of knowledge are given from the works of the holy fathers, of historians, orators, poets, physicians, naturalists, Christian and heathen classic authors, and arranged in alphabetical order, occupying one thousand and seventy pages; "a writing which we think," say Ekkehard, "will never be surpassed." In this work, among Greek authors, are quoted Aristotle, Hippocrates, and some but little known at present, Pandectus Medicus, Placidus, Afrinius. There is no naturalist named, but only in general we read "hoc physici dicunt." Still more clearly is this spirit expressed in the analogous compilations of a later date, such as the *Didascalion*, or the *Eruditio Didascalica* of Hugo of St. Victor, the *Mirrors of Vincent of Beauvais*, the *Metalogicus* and *Polykraticus* of John of Salisbury, and the work of Honorius of Autun de *Animæ Exilio et Patria*, the grounds of all which were furnished by Cassiodorus in his work on the Arts and Discipline of Liberal Letters, as also on the *Institutes of Divine Letters*, and by Isidor of Seville, in his twenty books of *Etymologies*. The address in Dante—

"O thou, who every art and science valuest!"

might, therefore, have been applied, with strict justice, to the philosophers of the middle ages.

"The wisdom of man in this life," says Hugo of St. Victor, "consists in the search and investigation of wisdom."|| "Our in-

* De Erudit. Hom. Interior. p. i. Lib. ii. xi.

† Vinc. Bellou. Spec. Doctrin. Lib. i. 13.

‡ Hen. Gand. sum. l. art. vii. q. ix.

§ De Sacramentis, Lib. i. pars l. c. 6.

|| Hugo S. Vict. in Eccles. Hom. xii.

* Stromat. Lib. vi. c. 11. † Id. Lib. i. c. 9.

telligence in the present life," says the Angel of the School, "has a natural aptitude for knowing material things, and, therefore, at present, we cannot know God unless by material effects. Hereafter the defect of our intelligence will be removed by glory, and then we shall be able to see God in his essence."* He even says, "to seek science not on account of something useful is not vain, since a natural desire cannot be vain."† It was not a rare thing in the schools of the middle ages to see some disciple from a rustic village, like the poor lad whom Pythagoras took from his play to instruct him in geometry, who would enthusiastically support his instructor rather than lose the advantage of hearing him.‡ Touron says, "that St. Thomas drew his wisdom in part from the study of nature," and cites his words: "This consideration of nature leads men to admire the virtue of the Highest God, and from this admiration proceed the fear and reverence of God; it also kindles the love of the divine goodness."§ Nothing, in fact, can be stronger than his language on this point throughout the four first chapters of the second book *contra Gentes*. "The consideration of creatures," he says, "is even necessary, not only for the instruction of truth, but also for the exclusion of errors;|| for error concerning creatures redounds to a false knowledge concerning God. Error circa creaturas redundat in falsam de Deo scientiam."¶ Hence the church, in the office of Tierce, beseeches God, in the words of David, to teach her children science.

But who can now conceive the simplicity of heart and spiritual illumination with which the men of faith pursued even these natural sciences? "To know truth," they said, "was to be united to God by natural force; to contemplate the true ideas of things was a kind of possession of God. An application of mind to metaphysics, to pure mathematics, and to all universal sciences, which rule over and comprise particular sciences, was held by them to be the purest and most perfect application of the mind to God of which man is by nature capable."** And hence we find Roger Bacon speaking of those "who had holily pursued mathematical

science." To them all knowledge was mathematical. St. Thomas says, that it belongs to science to have a true judgment of creatures; for want of which man is lost, as where he rests in them as his last end, and thus offends God. "*Flagitiosum facinus est*," says St. Augustin, "*frui utendis et uti fruendis*." So that, in his eyes, devotion itself was science. "Meditation," says Hugo of St. Victor, "delights in having a vast open space for exercise, where it may have a free scope for contemplating truth, for investigating the cause, one time of this, another of that, then, again, penetrating into deep things, and leaving nothing doubtful or obscure. If any one should learn to love such studies and pursue them, he would render his life sweet, and provide a great consolation for time of adversity; for this it is which separates the mind from the noise of earthly actions, and imparts even in the present life a certain sweet foretaste of eternal rest. And when, by the things which are made, he learns to seek and to understand Him who made all things, he at the same time instructs his mind with science and refreshes it with joy."*

Even in scientific inquiries, the philosophers of the middle age evince the deepest humility. "Since the things of which we treat," says Roger Bacon, "are great and uncommon, there should be grace and favour shewn to human fragility. *Nam ea quæ sunt maxime cognitionis secundum se, sunt minime apprehensionis quoad nos*. For truth involved is hidden, and placed in the depths."†

The manner in which the more curious investigations of nature were recommended and pursued during the middle ages may deserve attention, even while speaking of the laudable zeal for scientific observations. Isidore‡ and Martianus Capella§ endeavour to show that the doctrine of numbers is of great importance; and they remark, that in many places of Scripture a mystery is attached to them. The construction of the ancient churches, on the principles of a secret harmony, showed how their architects had been familiar with those curious mensurations of the human body which the ancients copied in all their works, and how scientific were their conceptions of proportion. In the type of Gothic architecture subsist the traditions

* P. l. q. lxxxvi. art. 2.

† In *Metaphys.* Arist. Lib. i.

‡ *Jamb. de Pyth. vita*, c. 5.

§ Lib. ii. *Cont. Gentes*, c. 2.

|| Lib. ii. c. 23. ¶ Lib. ii. c. 3.

** *Malebranche, Recherche de la Vérité*, v.

* Hugo S. Vict. *Didasc.* Lib. iii. c. 11.

† *Opus Maj.* p. i. a. 1.

‡ *Etymolog.* Lib. iii. c. 5.

§ *De Nuptiis Philologæ et Mercurii*, Lib. vii.

of antiquity respecting the doctrine of numbers and proportions, as Michelet shows by measurements made in the different cathedrals of France;* and it is the remark of a great English philosopher, that this art did not flourish at all the worse for being treated in a manner somewhat mystical, and that the relations of geometrical figures, which were employed as appears from Cesario's plan of the cathedral of Milan, may really involve principles of beauty or stability.† The treatise on the analogy of names by Cardinal Thomas Cajetan, truly a second St. Thomas, may show how alive were Catholic philosophers to pursue every subject under a scientific form. If, however, we should be disposed to accuse those of the middle age as inclining to fanciful speculations, we should remember that they never lost sight of a solid and useful end; and, in fact, their aim seems to have always been to pass, as Cicero says, "from these shells to the kernel; and as it often happens that he who is recommended to some one makes more of him to whom he is recommended than of him by whom," so they would have said with the same philosopher, "it is not strange that we, at first recommended to wisdom by such elementary things, should afterwards prize Wisdom herself far more than those who first conducted us to her."‡ Some of their inquiries, to which they attached importance, had occupied the attention of the greatest intelligences in the ancient world. Every one has heard that a candidate who sought admission among the Pythagoreans had to satisfy the eye of the master, who would not receive any one to his friendship, or even amongst his acquaintance, unless from his countenance and external manner he conceived a good opinion of his mind.§ Cylo the Crotonian being objected by him on no other ground. The observation of nature with a view to this kind of proficiency was much practised in the middle ages. Raban Maur says that *Vultus* is so called "*quod per eum voluntas animi ostenditur.*"|| The address of Michael Scot to the emperor, recommending him to study physiognomy on the ground that nature does nothing in vain, and that nothing in bodies is without its purpose, is a passage which cannot be read without interest. His book, compiled

at the request of the Emperor Frederick, begins as follows:—"Emperor, amongst the things about which you ought to be solicitous is the knowledge of good and evil. It is necessary for you to investigate by yourself, in books of authors of all sciences, and especially of those which are called arts; and this you will do when your mind is in quiet rest and your body has liberty, putting aside the business of nations pertaining to your majesty; for you should know that there are two times to a man living—the time of peace and the time of war; and there are two times of food—of corporal and spiritual: and as the corporal retains the body in a good state, so does spiritual the mind, when taken at a proper season, for not at all times all things are fitting. So spiritual meat retains the mind in a good state if it be taken with reason and measure in fitting time, respecting both age and virtue in man; for it is written, as frigid by warm and warm by frigid is tempered, so contrary things are cured by contraries. Similarly it is useful to inquire from diverse authors and masters, on account of diverse sciences, because different men feel different things, *diversi diversa sentiunt*; therefore, it is my advice that you keep always carefully with you doctors, masters, and men naturally ingenious, and that you often converse with them on many subjects, wisely and in a domestic manner. You will think of different things with different men, and you will question them, and you will treasure up their sayings in your heart, that afterwards they may be profitable to you and to others. It is your study to reign long, and this will result if you give yourself to virtues, avoiding vices; and of such mortality I will say something, if God willeth; but here I will say that you give your heart to the knowledge of good, according to the measure of discretion; that you may be the friend of God in faith, hope, and work, nor omit to embrace that science which, by philosophers, is naturally named physiognomy; and this is that science, amongst others, by which many men cautiously are accustomed to boast and to be exalted with the great of the earth—emperors, similarly, with many kings and barons; not because they have precedence of other men, but on account of this science, and on account of many others of the same kind which they know secretly. Therefore, it is said honour a man on account of science; seek a known friend on account of necessity: for with some it is better to philosophize than to be rich; and with some it is better to be rich

* Hist. de France, ii. 676.

† Whewell, Hist. Induct. sc. i. 350.

‡ De Finibus, Lib. iii.

§ Porphy. de Vit. Pythag.

|| Glossæ Latino-Barbaricæ de Partibus Humanæ Corporis apud Goldast. tom. ii.

than to philosophize; and with some both are injurious, and with some neither ought to be required—as with those making true penance in this life; for the investigation of science is the most beautiful thing in nature, and its perfection is ascribed to physiognomy by many of the ancient philosophers. Therefore, this science drew its name from that study of nature which was long and long investigated, and with innocence congregated; for a wise man saith physiognomy is the science of nature, and he that is skilled therein can sufficiently know the differences of animals and of persons in all their degrees, and in effect all science. Physiognomy is the doctrine of salvation, the election of good, the renouncement of evil, the comprehension of virtue, and the putting aside of vices. But this is induced by the true love of God and the fear of the devil—by meritorious faith, the hope of an imperishable reward of eternal life, and the judgment of death; because it seems almost as if here all things are left to others, because they are held; and to no one availeth science, or power, or congregation of persons, or the grace of beauty or will; therefore, some other saith, *Omnia transibunt, nos ibimus; ibitis; ibunt: cari, non cari conditione pari*; and elsewhere it is said, *Omnia transibunt præter amare Deum*. Establish, therefore, to thyself, O Frederic, emperor! abbreviated rules and constitutions of this science of physiognomy, the yoke of which will draw upon you a great price of praise, of wisdom, and virtue; there will increase to you also greatly a vast genius of wisdom, which if you keep always in mind you will better understand the sayings of those who speak to you, you will more cautiously estimate your wise men and others by seeing or hearing them, and also other men indifferently who may have occasion to address you, which is not a little thing; and by industry in this science you will have in you secretly a great part of the counsels of those counselling you."

That science of this kind entered largely into the wisdom which passed in romantic literature for magical, may be presumed. The Dean of Badajos, who consults the magician Torribio of Toledo, to whom he vows eternal gratitude, who on descending into his caves beneath the Tagus has a vision, in which, supposing himself raised to the highest offices, he repays his benefactor with insult and cruelty, and thus verifies what his teacher had predicted, until the latter removes the spell and brings

him back to his senses, is an instance in proof.

With respect to the more solid studies of physical science, we may observe that the love for the beauties of external nature, which was so predominant in ages of faith, and so interwoven with the simplicity of Catholic manners, was not remotely allied to a spirit of subtle inquiry into her secrets. The public voice in the middle ages would not have resembled that of the young sophist in the comedy, who affirms that the sole prerogative of men over other animals consisted in their having the power to vote.* The standard of beatitude, in those times, was not that of Strepsiades,

Νικῶν πράττων καὶ βουλεύων, καὶ τῇ γλῶττι
πολεμίζων

but the general conviction rather was, that the prerogative of man consisted in the faculty of investigating creatures, and his beatitude in seeing God who made them. This gave a charm even to all the ordinary labours of life. Who can doubt but that to the children of St. Benedict spread over the world, the tilling of the ground became as much an exercise of philosophy as of penance. Their example alone, in that respect, was sufficient to prepare a new era for society; and the cultivation of the earth was no longer ignominious. "Agriculture in Paradise would not have been laborious, as after the fall," says St. Thomas, "but it would have been delightful, on account of the experiment of the virtue of nature."†

That the Church protected and encouraged every department of science, is a fact which no one denies, until he has some end to answer in misrepresenting the ecclesiastical authority. Copernicus, as we have already seen, addressed the work which contained his discoveries to Pope Paul III.; and it was published, as the author states, at the entreaty of friends, one of whom was a cardinal, Nicolaus Schonbergius, whom he styles in *omne genere literatum celebris*, and the other a bishop, Tidemannus Gisius, whom he describes as *sacrarum et omnium bonarum literarum studiosissimus*.‡

But, it will be replied, granting that the study of the sciences was sanctioned and encouraged, still the result was undeserving of the name of philosophy. That such an opinion should be nearly universal at present is not strange, when we read in one

* Nubes, 1329. † P. i. q. c. 11. art. 3.

‡ Pref. ad Paul III.

of the best and most popular works on the history of science, that "previous to the publication of the *Novum Organum* of Lord Bacon, natural philosophy, in any legitimate and extensive sense of the word, could hardly be said to exist." But, as far as relates to incompatibility of principles, we have already seen on what ground such statements depend, since it is not true that the method of conducting physical investigations had previously been exclusive of experiment and induction. With respect to the positive results, too, it would not be difficult, perhaps, to awaken doubts, lest much that has been written by men who wanted either leisure or inclination to consult the works of the middle ages may not require some correction. Roger Bacon complains that for the last thirty or forty years mathematical science had declined.* Such a complaint is rather inconsistent with the common opinion that his light was that of a new and solitary star. The science which was possessed by the Anglo-Saxon monks cannot be wholly overlooked by an impartial observer.† One meriting that title will not forget their eagerness to calculate the orbits of the planets, their rising and setting, and the return of the eclipses, and that the influence of the moon on the tides was not a secret to Bede. He will remark that the smallness of our globe compared with the heavens was known to them through the work of Boethius. A scientific astronomical table showing the course of the stars, was for three hundred years shown in the abbey of St. Gall as the work of Tutilo in the ninth century.‡ In the same cloister Hermann Contractus, in 1050, published astronomical works. Hartmotus, who was abbot of that house in the tenth century, made a map of the world with subtle ability, as old writers say. That science was sometimes prized may be inferred from the fact, that Alphonso X. of Castile, in 1262, gave more than four hundred thousand crowns to some Arabs for drawing up astronomical tables. The views in general with which men pursued medicinal philosophy, though it was rather diætic than pharmaceutic, being counted not among the liberal arts, but as a second philosophy, which required a knowledge of them all,§ seem to indicate that they were not wholly ignorant of its proper mode of cultivation.

A list of the possessions in art and science,

* *Specula Mathematica*. I.

† Bede de *Natura Rerum*—*De Ratione Temperum*.

‡ Ildefons. von Arx *Geschichte S. Gall*, i. 100.

§ Isidori *Etymolog.* Lib. iv. 13.

which we inherit from the middle ages, would certainly startle any one who never heard of them excepting from modern historians of philosophy. If the assistance of Aristotle was demanded in the study of natural philosophy, we must by no means conclude that his commentators in the middle age never sought to obtain additional truths or new generalizations, or to bring his assertions to the test of experiment. The servility ascribed to them by a recent author is not reconcilable with their avowed intentions. Albert the Great, being appointed by the Dominicans to lecture on Aristotle, explains his plan as follows, in the beginning:—"It is our intention," he says, "in natural science, to satisfy, as far as we are able, the brethren of our order, who for many years past have been requesting us to compose for them such a book on physics as will convey to them a knowledge of natural science, and also enable them to understand Aristotle. Our manner, therefore, will be to follow in this work the order of Aristotle, and to add whatever will be necessary to explain his meaning, but without making mention of his text; and besides this, we shall occasionally make digressions."* Their having taken for granted the moral truths revealed respecting the universe, was a feature of their philosophy which ought not to have given offence. "In general," says Marjorin, "the object of a science referred to its cause, considered in its type, and in a manner seen in God, furnished that science with a general theorem, which implied the law of generation of all the realities relative to that object, and the principle of all truths manifested by them; and though modern philosophers, who reject all considerations of causes and ends, and confine themselves strictly to the observation of facts, deserve praise for not suffering vain fancies, in the absence of true principles, to interfere with that observation, one cannot doubt but that their progress would have been greater if they had imitated the scholastics, so far as not to neglect systematically the light of revelation and the action and destiny of man in appreciating the system of the universe." In some respects it would seem as if the expressions of philosophers in the middle ages, relative to scientific subjects, had been less fettered than those of some modern writers of late in England—or rather, I should say, there is reason to conclude that the idea of any restraint being required on religious grounds, as long as they did not

* *Physic. Lib. i. Tract. i. c. 1. tom. ii.*

seek to make religion come forward to confirm their scientific views, never occurred to them. The allusion of Dante,

"There are who deem the world hath oft been into chaos turned,"*

seems to indicate that the opinion of modern geologists was not unknown to the middle ages. In fact, St. Jerome, speaking of certain notions in the work of Origen, *περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, says, that in the second book he asserts that there are innumerable worlds, not existing at the same time, and like one another, as Epicurus held, but that at the end of one world another would begin; and that before this world of ours there had been another world, and that another would succeed it, and so on, in long order; and, he doubted, whether these worlds resembled each other, or were dissimilar;† and St. Jerome says, he supported this notion from the text, "Quid est quod fuit? ipsum quod erit. Et quid est quod factum est? ipsum quod futurum est. Et non est omne novum sub sole, quod loquatur et dicat: Ecce hoc novum est. Jam enim fuit in sæculis pristinis, quæ fuerunt ante nos:"‡ on which passage St. Jerome makes no comment. St. Basil, indeed, expressly says, that "before this world there existed something that our mind can imagine, but which the Scripture suppressed in its recital, because it was not convenient to speak of it to men whom it instructed, and who are children for knowledge. "Yes, without doubt," he adds, "before this world was created there existed a constitution more ancient, agreeable to the celestial powers—a constitution which has preceded visible times, which has had a beginning, but which will never have an end."§ The schoolmen would not have been alarmed at the works of some modern professors, which have excited uneasiness, of late, in England.

Hugo of St. Victor, speaking of the sayings of the holy fathers respecting the creation of the world in six days, says, "I rather believe that under the form of assertion they often propose inquiry;" and, he remarks, that many interpreted expressions in the first chapter of Genesis in a mystic sense.||

The advanced state of all physical studies in the middle ages has been briefly pointed out in the Third Book of this history. Albert the Great, receiving his sovereign during the

depth of winter amidst trees loaded with fruits and flowers, is a fact not to be explained by crediting the injurious report of men who came long after him respecting his magical power. There must have been considerable optical science, when mirrors and painted images were made, by means of which, figures could be shown in the air at moonlight, such as Cornelius Agrippa tells us had been formerly made by Pythagoras, and lately, too, witnessed by himself.* The same author speaks of perpetual lamps, and of unctions, by means of which, red-hot iron could be borne in the hands. An iron fly was shown to Charles V., which, "without aid of any one, took its gallant flight, made an entire round, and then, as if tired and endued with judgment, perched on his arm." Admirable, no doubt, were the scientific figures, the bronze speaking heads, and all the other mechanical subtilties which were contrived by Albert the Great, Michael Scot, Roger Bacon, Pope Sylvester, John Denys, and Francis Flussard de Candale, the Archimedes of Gascony.

In allusion to such science, John Picus of Mirandula cites, among the moderns who study the occult mysteries of natural magic, Alchindus, Roger Bacon, and William of Paris.† These men could execute, too, as well as contrive; which at least ought not to be objected to them, since we are told by a great philosopher that early talent of this kind is a general prognostic of a true inductive genius. Gabriel Barrius says that he knew a priest, Jerome Faba of Cænisi in Calabria, a man of most holy life and not void of learning, who had nearly an universal genius, being skilled in the lowest and highest things, being a carpenter, painter, and sculptor many of whose carved pieces were so admirable that they seemed miraculous to the Emperor Charles V., and to Philip, King of Spain.‡ Still, it is true, the object in all investigations and collections of natural science was connected with the beatitude of the clean of heart. The mechanism of the clock of the cathedral of Cambria, made in 1397, as it is said, by a shepherd, which showed the hour, day, and year, course of the sun and moon, was employed also when it struck in producing bronze figures, representing a part of our Lord's passion, which came out in procession and moved on before the spectator till the number of strokes was completed. Similarly the study of

* Hell. xii. † Id. Epist. xciv. ad Avitum.

‡ Ecclesiast. i. 9, 10.

§ S. Basil Hexameron, Hom. i.

|| Hugo S. Viet. de Sacramentis, Lib. i. p. i.

* Cornel. Agrip. de Occult. Philosoph. Lib. i. c. 11. l.

† Apologia.

‡ Gabriel Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriae, Lib. iii.

minerals and stones and pursued in reference to the churches, or even to the conveyance of religious admonition by symbols; as when, King John, being a diligent examiner and collector of precious gems, Pope Innocent III. sent him a ring and sought to instruct him in his duty as a Christian, by turning to an allegorical sense the colours of its different stones.*

Still, as we before observed, however the study of the sciences may have been sanctioned and encouraged in the middle ages, there were some impediments in its way, which in later times have been removed; for, to return to the remark of Cuvier, it is unquestionable that religious fervour and the high ascetic union of such multitudes of souls with God must have partially interfered with its cultivation. Many capable of making great advance might have exclaimed with Dante, after he had seen Beatrice, or the supreme wisdom,—“How these things are, I know not; but mine eyes have now taken view of her by whom all other thoughts are barred admittance.”† Beyond doubt, many of the holy inhabitants of cloisters preferred to a proficiency in science the edification of the poor. Thus Vincent of Beauvais laments his having spent so much time and pains in the physical and medical part of this great work; “in which,” saith he, “as I neither feel satisfied myself, so do I fear I may have displeased both God and men; not that the things themselves are not good and useful to those who study them, but because it did not become my profession so diligently to apply to investigate and describe things of that nature.”‡ Generally, too, an intense application to natural philosophy was only deemed laudable when the farthest end was something different from the mere scientific result.

“Some,” says Hugo of St. Victor, “seek truth, and love to have it, on account of God; but yet they do not seek it on account of the supreme good. Such are they who investigate the secrets of nature, and are impelled by a strong desire that they may know what is true only in hidden things. In this, indeed, there is also what may justly delight them, provided that the heart of man, by that which it loves below, may be raised to the love of Him who is the supreme good.”§ “The first science arises from the vision of God, who is the fountain and origin

of all the science which man possesses.”* It was this, and not the delusion of alchemy or magic, as some affirm, which animated the exertions of the noble and accredited philosophers of the middle ages in all their studies. The scientific investigator of nature would repeat, with no less fervour than the mystic theologian, the words of St. Augustin, “What shall I do that I may find my God? I will consider the earth; it is beautiful, but it has a Maker. Wondrous are the secrets of seeds and plants; but they have a Maker. I look at the vastness of the ocean: I am amazed: I seek its Maker. I behold [the] heaven, and I admire the beauty of the stars, and the splendour of the sun: these things are wondrous, they are to be praised; they are not earthly, they are even celestial; but yet my thirst is not satisfied;—I thirst after Him who made them. I return to myself, and I inquire, who am I who ask about such things? I find that I have a body and a soul; I perceive that my soul is better than my body, for it can command it, and the body only serves it; for when I looked at the earth, and the sea, and the sky, my eyes were only windows to my soul: it is something interior which sees, for when any one is absent in thought, in vain do the eyes open and glare. The God whom I seek is not to be sought for with the eyes. The soul, moreover, sees something by itself, which it does not perceive by the eyes, like colours, nor hear with the ears, like sounds, nor smell by the nostrils, like odours, nor feel by the touch, like bodies. What can this be? Take wisdom or justice: they have neither colour, nor sound, nor smell, nor can they be touched; and yet they are beautiful, and they are beheld by the soul. What did Tobias see, when, blind, he gave counsel of life to his son, who saw? There is, therefore, something which the mind, the ruler and inhabitant of the body, perceives without the instrumentality of the senses, but by itself; for it sees itself, by itself; and so far from needing the corporeal senses to know itself, it, on the contrary, tears itself away from them, as from so many impediments, that it may see and know itself by itself.”†

In a word, the blessed clean of heart saw God in creatures, and they studied even physical sciences, chiefly from a desire of fixing and extending that vision. And now, ere we advance further, returning, from past to present time, let us direct our eyes down-

* Hurter Geschichte Inn. III. ii. 60.

† Purg. xxxii.

‡ Vincent Bellov. Prolog. cxviii.

§ Erudit. Theolog. ex Miscellan. Lib. i. tit. 72.

* Erudit. Theolog. ex Miscellan. Lib. iii. tit. 3.
† Tractat. in Ps. 41.

ward and contemplate what a world already stretched under our feet there lies : for how few, comparatively, are the persons living, who look around them with enthusiasm, and feel that they behold the Deity in the varied productions of his almighty power. With the fathers of the Church, and the masters of the school, the exercises even concerning bodies, were referred to incorporeal things. "It is the part of the more sublime reason," says St. Augustin, "to judge of these corporeal things according to incorporeal and eternal reasons."* But, as with the ancients, after the rise of Epicurism, so with the moderns after the rise of the new opinions, natural discipline, omitting all higher objects, was pursued only in reference to public or private physical utility, and physics became the study of bodies, for the sake of promoting the pleasures and advantages of men ; so that there is in effect a return to that spirit lamented by St. Chrysostom, when he says, that the rich, looking on their parks and mansions, repeat what the Apostles said on Thabor, "bonum est nos hic esse."

— Studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
Unmindful of their Maker.

Nor is this all ; for how often is the investigation of natural philosophy pursued with a view not to strengthen, but to weaken moral truths, or rather to overthrow them ?

In the system which reduces the divine action to the mechanism of the universe, nature raises itself as a wall of brass

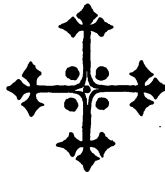
between man and his Creator ; there is no communication between them—no active relation—no society of love, "and deism," as a French theologian remarks, "is in fact, only the absence of the Deity, as atheism is the denial of his existence." From this arguments are attempted to be gathered to deny the existence of the Deity—the immortality of the soul, and all religion, which is styled superstition, after the manner of the Epicureans of old, whose master says, "having known the nature of all things, levamur superstitione, we are delivered from the fear of death : we are not disturbed by the ignorance of things from which those horrible fears are wont to arise." A time there was when science and theology went hand in hand ; but now the natural philosopher goes out with the spirit of Cain into the fields of human speculation ; and if reminded from time to time of God, by his humble brother, who remains within the sanctuary, he will turn against him with bitter words of scorn, to tax him with servility, and become, perhaps, in moments of social convulsion, not his critic only, but his murderer. The race is of all times, but how is it multiplied of late ! "Lingua eorum et adinventiones eorum contra Dominum."* The only reply which the scholastic philosophers would make to their objections, would resemble that of just reason in the ancient poem,

Ὁ μοι μανίας τῆς σῆς, πόλειός θ',
Ἦτις σε τρέφει
Λυμαινόμενον τοῖς μισοῦσίν σου.†

* De Trin. Lib. xii. c. 2.

* Is. ii.

† Nubes, 891.



CHAPTER XII.



WE come now to consider how the clean of heart beheld God, in what appeared as deviations from the general laws, by which the visible world is sustained and governed, and this will lead us to remark some essential characteristics of the Catholic philosophy, by which it is distinguished from that of modern times. The way is already prepared for us, having seen its piety, humility, and Catholicity, for piety must recognise the agency of God, humility adore his absolute and ordinate power, and Catholicity admit the whole system of his manifestations. The piety of men in ages of faith led them to see not only the divine hand in the conduct of all human things in general, but also an especial providence guiding and determining events with relation to each individual. Without the clue, indeed, which supernatural light confers,

— Full hard it is to read aright,
The course of heavenly cause, or understand
The secret meaning of th' eternal might,
That rules men's waies, and rules the thoughts
of living wight.

But for the clean of heart, even though their own fate might sometimes have been included among these divers obscure judgments, on which they had expressly treated, as in the instance of Gui de Roye, who, after composing the *Doctrinal de Sapience*, perished in a manner so tragical, and so unlike what any one could have anticipated,* there was an abundant vision. St. Augustin alludes to the disorders of human society, and says, "fire, hail, snow, ice, the spirit of whirlwinds accomplish his word." "It would be long to commemorate," he adds, "the apparent disorders in the world, which, by fools, are ascribed to chance, and by the wise to the word of God. Wherever he wishes the fire shines, and the clouds are borne, which bring either rain or hail. God knows what he is about, do you only fear and be good."†

"Who knows not," says Richard of St. Victor, "to what confusion is subject the various multiplicity and multitudinous variety of this visible machine, in which all things happen equally to the just and to the impious, to the good and to the evil, to the clean and to the unclean, to him who immolates victims, and to the despiser of sacrifice."* Yet so far from the perturbations of time rendering them insensible to the hand of Almighty Providence, in the conduct of nations, they affirmed that the history of the world is not comprehensible, without a government of the world.

St. Thomas remarks, that the Scripture, in order to show that casual things proceed according to the order of a certain superior cause, saith, "time and chance are in all things under the sun," and not simply chance, because it is according to a certain order of time, that casual defects are found in these things; for according to one act of the government of God, things are differently governed according to their diversity; for some by their nature are self-agents, and these are governed by God no less, for they are moved by God operating within them, and persuading them to good, by precepts; and this is according to the perfection of his government, that some are used as instruments, in like manner as a master makes his pupils not alone to understand, but also to teach others.†

Hence, those solemn and curious reflections, so common in the middle ages, respecting the interposition of Providence in this life, as when the death of Emerick, king of Hungary, in 1204, was considered an indication of divine judgment, from his expiring on the same day on which the preceding year he had thrown his brother Andrew into prison, laden with chains, having caught him by stratagem.‡ Men of the spiritual life, who watched the events of the world, could recount many strange and admirable instances of this kind, and a book composed from their conversation, would

* Berthier, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. xv. 236.
† Tract. in Ps. 148.

* *De Contemplat.* P. 1. Lib. ii. c. 26.

† P. 1. q. ciii. art. 5. 6.

‡ *Chron. Austral. Chron. Claustroneob.*

have exhibited the action of Almighty God in a point of view that could not fail to excite love and reverence. Repeatedly they feel constrained to say these are not natural events; they strengthen from strange to stranger. Their thought was, therefore, that of Schelling, when he observed, in his lectures on Academic study, "that amongst the holy there is nothing holier than history—that great drama of the world—that eternal poem of the divine intelligence, from a consideration of which view Hurter applies to history, what Lord Bacon affirms of philosophy, '*Leviore haustus advocant a Deo, planiores ad Deum reducunt.*'" Many of the expressions of this belief which had been remarked, as characterizing the conversation of eminent men, are recorded by ancient writers. The Emperor Maximilian Second, we are told, used always to console and strengthen himself in affliction, by saying, "*Dominus providebit.*"* And Alphonso, the wise king of Arragon, to one who asked who was the happiest man, replied, him, I judge to be the happiest, who accepts all things which happen to him, no otherwise than as things done by God.† In short, it was the spirit of these ages to recognise the hand of supreme mercy in all things, whether, as St. Chrysostom says, "the object of Providence could be discerned or not; whether the will of men co-operated or not, for it was well known that God confers many favours upon us against our will, and many which we do not know to be such at the time."‡

"Our Lord," says St. Bonaventura, "may seem to sleep, as when with his disciples in the ship during the storm, which terrified them, and yet he does not the less attend to our safety."§ "Born in turbulent times," says Cardan, "exposed to many vicissitudes, suffering from poverty, forced to travel so often with men not only aliens from religion, but also its enemies, it must be ascribed rather to a miracle than to wisdom, rather to the divine assistance than to virtue, that I should not have been moved. But I was always most observant of religion, and the worship of God, mindful not alone of the divine majesty, but also of the blessed Virgin Mary and of the blessed Martin, being admonished in a dream, that under his patronage I should lead a more peaceful life."|| To men of such intellectual habits it used to seem as if God in the government of the

world was pleased to attend even to many of those sacred delicate harmonies between thought and things external, which the human mind delights to trace or to imagine, as when some holy person whose patron was St. Michael, and whose fervent vow through a long sickness, had been to obtain release upon his festival, would sweetly expire on that day, and at the moment when the Church was singing, in conspectu Angelorum *Psallam tibi Deus meus.*

There is no occasion, however, for producing instances of this spirit, as they may be found in every page of the ancient Catholic writings; but we may remark in passing that it was this habit of seeing God in all the events and affairs of the world, which rendered life in former times so full of high mystic inspiration, so poetical, so ideal. "Circumstance," which a modern poet styles, "that unspiritual God," was then a most fruitful source of spirituality; every act and turn was full of thought—full of mystery; the giving a cup of water—the doffing a cap in salutation—the lifting of an aventail to greet some holy man—the holding a styrrup in a procession, was an intellectual act, associated with the love of Christ. Every one true to his profession deserved the appellation of Israel, the man seeing God, and might have said too, "*vidi Dominum, et salva facta est anima mea.*"*

The justice of these views was evident, indeed, from faith, but considering them only with the eyes of a philosopher, it was deemed more wise to adopt the principles of the stoics and Pythagoreans, than to confess one's self an Epicurean who held the contrary. In fact, they were part of the great primeval traditions of mankind, conveyed in those noble fragments of ancient poesy which are so often cited by the early fathers, as in the lines given by St. Clement of Alexandria—

——— τὸν οὐδέποτε ἔωμεν

ἄρρητον, μεσθαὶ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσαι μὲν ἀγναι
πᾶσαι δ' ἀνθρώπων ἀγοραί, μεστὴ δὲ θάλασσα
καὶ λιμένες, πάντα δὲ Διὸς κεκρήμεθα πάντες.†

The study of etymology itself indicated the first notions of all people, Θεός seemed to be derived naturally from *θεόμα*. The Ὀλύμπου σκοποὶ of Pindar,‡ and the Homeric expression of πόποι for ἐπόποι or ἐπάπται sufficiently evinced too what was the faith of the earliest times. What else was it but

* Drexelius de Conform. Hum. Volunt. cum Div. Lib. v. 6. † Panormitan in vita ejus.

‡ Hom. Coloss. § Medit. Vitæ Christi, cxxi.

‡ Hieron. Card. de Vita Propria, Lib. ii. c. 22.

* Isidori Etymolog. Lib. vii.

† Stromat. v. 14.

‡ Olymp. 1.

this tradition which the different philosophers taught, as when the Pythagoreans said that nothing happened by fortune, but that the providence of God determined every thing :* a conviction which Pindar, who belonged to that sect, introduces into his fifth Pythian ode—*παντὶ μὲν θεὸν αἴτιον ὑπεριθήμεν* and which is delivered by Æschylus in all the characteristic majesty of his expressive style ;

*ἰδὼ, ἣ διατ' Διὸς
παναιτίου πανεργέτα
τί γὰρ βροτοῖς ἄνευ Διὸς τελέεται ;
τί τῶνδ' οὐ θεόκρατὸν ἔστω ;†*

Hence Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in allusion to men who ridicule the belief of divine appearances ascribing them to human arrogance, and teaching that there is no providence, says "those who profess this godless philosophy, if indeed one must call it philosophy."‡ The error of those naturalists, who look only to secondary causes, seems to have been so deeply estimated by Virgil—for, notwithstanding his supposed panegyric of Lucretius, his Anacronistic views of happiness,§ and his Pantheistic notion,|| I would be slow to believe him an Epicurean—that, after ascribing this impious speech to Palinurus,

"Magnanime Ænea, non, si mihi Jupiter auctor
Spondeat, hoc sperem Italiam contingere cælo,"

he represents him as retaining the same mind even on the banks of Cocytus, still unable to recognise an ordaining intelligence ;—

"——— nec me Deus æquore mersit,
Namque gubernaculum multâ vi forte revulsum
Cui datus hærebam custos, cursusque regebam
Præcipitans traxi mecum."¶

Moreover, in ages of faith, it was a sign of the good spirit recognised by every one, to revere with sincere piety the saints reigning with God, and the servants of God still on earth ;** and this disposition prepared men for discerning the hand of the Creator stretched out to honour, in the eyes of men and angels, those who were found faithful.

But while the piety of the Catholic philosophy was thus, at all times, disposed to

recognise the agency of God, its humility caused men to adore his power, and thus removed another great obstacle which prevents the impious and proud from beholding him in the more extraordinary acts of his Almighty Providence. The clean of heart, therefore, saw God in his miraculous operations amongst men. Here is a great difficulty for the moderns. "We live in times," says Berthier, "when the wonderful, as soon as it presents itself, becomes an object of criticism. This is praiseworthy on many accounts : hence are prevented error, superstition, and fanaticism, the shameful effects of a precipitate admiration.* But," continues this historian, "in this, as in all other respects, criticism ought to be judicious, impartial, and attentive," rules unhappily by which it has not been always directed in reference to the subject of this Chapter ; so that it is as much the language of the critics, as the object presented to them, which imperatively demands criticism. Let us hear them speak : "These miracles," says a late writer, "are a terrible reproach to the Roman Catholic Church of the middle ages. Why did she sanction them ? Why require that miracles should precede canonization ? Why approve miracles at all ? Why not uniformly receive them with distrust ? They have, indeed, been long exploded, and for this we must thank the progress of knowledge." Such are the questions and assertions of many at present, which one conversant with ages of faith may answer with a smile, as this other doubt which moves them is less harmful, for it brings no immediate peril of removing them from God. It is, however, a difficult pass for the faltering steps of some who would wish to follow, and we must endeavour to make it smooth for them ; a formidable task if one much regards the rubrick of the Dresden Library, "*Philosophi falsa et fanatica*," supposing its particular application just. At all events it is one that ought not to be undertaken lightly, for it requires more reflection than most others devolving on an historian ; and as Socrates says, "until we philosophize sufficiently, it will not be possible for any one to speak properly on any subject."†

Inaccuracy as to facts ought first to be corrected. The reproach then must not be limited to the Roman Church, or to the middle ages : miracles were uniformly received with distrust ; and they have not

* Jamb. de Pythag. vita, cap. 28.

† Agam. 1485. ‡ Antiq. Rom. Lib. ii. c. 68.

§ Geor. iii. 6. 6. || Æn. vi. 724.

¶ VI. 348.

** Bona de Discretionem Spirituum, c. 6.

* Discours sur la Pucelle d'Orléans.

† Phædo.

been long exploded, since hardly a year passes without bringing conviction to the minds of many persons that miracles continue to take place. Hugo of St. Victor remarks, "that the apostle does not reprove the philosophers for having inquired into the nature of things, but for having endeavoured to confine the power of God, which is infinite, under the dominion of natural causes."*

The philosophy of the ages of faith, in lending a willing ear to the witnesses who attest instances of a supernatural and immediate interposition of divine agency, superseding and surpassing all the known power of physical secondary causes, evinced only a strict logical consistency with its own essential principles, which required it not to resist or question the power of Almighty God. In the first place the fact was so. This interposition did take place; or, as St. Thomas says, "God does produce sometimes the effects of secondary causes without them, or effects to which secondary causes do not extend."†

There was a mystic, supernatural, or miraculous side to all things, noticed in the preceding books of this history, to which I have seldom alluded, in order to accelerate our course; but of the reality of which I must now declare, once for all, my unlimited conviction. Yes, throughout these ages there were continually seen by the clean of heart miraculous gifts and manifestations of God;‡ all is true of which we read in the lives of saints, so far as concerns the general fact, that they felt, heard, saw, and understood things beyond mortality. Without going back to primitive times to tell of what Cyprian, Marianus, Perpetua, and the holy martyrs saw before or during their passion, let those who would observe instances in proof, refer to what Goerres has collected from the lives of Mary of Agreda, Jerome Gratianus the Carmelite, Joseph of Cupertino, the Capuchin friar, Catherine of Sienna, and other canonized men and women of the middle ages alone.§ I will not delay to notice the trivial phrases with which the Catholic belief on this head is chiefly assailed; such as, "Miracles are impossible"—"The age of miracles is passed"—"Miracles were invented by interested priests;" and such like: for as they rest on no ground of reason, it is for reason, to despise them; but if any thing sound

like argument let us attend. "If an eye-witness exist," says a modern historian, "he never as such (we confine our observations to the earlier ages of the church) alludes to miracles." This would, indeed, be much, if there were much truth in it; but what can be concluded from an assertion opposed to fact? Let any one read the account which St. Augustin gives of the miracles which he saw with his own eyes wrought at Carthage and other places, and he will know how to estimate its value. The instances which St. Augustin relates in the twenty-second book of his *City of God*, are precisely similar to those which Catholics in all ages, as well as in our own, have believed were passing under their eyes. St. Irenæus reproaches the heretics against whom he writes, that they could not give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, or raise the dead to life, as he testifies was frequently done in the true church.* Tertullian† and St. Pacian‡ pursue the same line of argument. Miracles are attested by Theophilus of Antioch, Minutius Felix, Arnobius, Lactantius, St. Athanasius, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome and others of the holy fathers, and by a cloud of witnesses in long succession through the middle ages. St. Nicetas, bishop of Treves, in the sixth century, in order to convert her husband, Alboin, king of the Lombards, from Arianism, advises Queen Clodisind to induce him to send confidential messengers to witness the miracles wrought at the tomb of St. Martin, St. Germanus, or St. Hilary, adding, "Are such things done in the churches of the Arians?"§ About the same time, Levigild, king of the Goths in Spain, an Arian, who was converted or nearly so by his Catholic son St. Hermengild, reproached his Arian bishops that no miracles were wrought among them, as was the case, he said, among the Catholics.|| The seventh century beheld the miracles of our apostle, St. Augustin of Canterbury, wrought in confirmation of the doctrine which he taught, as was recorded on his tomb.¶ In the eleventh century we have no less a witness than Richard of St. Victor, who, speaking of the proofs of the Catholic religion, exclaims, "O Lord, if what we believe is an error, thou art the author of it, since it is com-

* Cont. Hæres. Lib. ii. c. 31.

† Lib. de Præscrip.

‡ Ep. ii. ad Symphor.

§ Labbe Concil. tom. v. p. 835.

¶ Greg. Turon. i. ix. c. 15.

¶ Bed. Eccles. Hist. i. ii. c. 3.

* Hugo S. Vict. quæst. circo. Epist. ad Philip-pens.

† Sum. p. 1. Q. cv. 6.

‡ Goerres die Christliche Mystik, passim.

§ 11. 83. 97. 101.

firmed amongst us by those signs and prodigies which could not be wrought but by thee."* St. Bernard, St. Dominic, St. Francis Xavier, all appealed to the miracles which God wrought by their hands in proof of the Catholic doctrine. Those of St. Bernard in the twelfth century are innumerable, and nothing is deficient in the evidence by which they are attested. All France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, bore testimony to them; and prelates, princes, and the emperor himself, were often the spectators of them. In a journey which the saint made into Germany, he was followed by Philip, archdeacon of Liege, who was sent by Sampson, archbishop of Rheims, to observe his actions. This writer, accordingly, gives an account of a vast number of instantaneous cures which the holy abbot performed on the lame, the blind, the paralytic, and other diseased persons. Speaking of those wrought at Cologne, he says, "They were not performed in a corner, but the whole city was witness to them. If any one doubts or is curious, he may easily satisfy himself on the spot, especially as some of them were wrought on persons of no inconsiderable rank."† Preaching at Sarlat against the Henricians, he took some loaves of bread and blessed them; after which he said, "By this you shall know that I preach to you the true doctrine and the heretics a false doctrine, all your sick who shall eat of this bread shall recover their health:" which prediction was confirmed by the event.‡ St. Bernard himself, addressing Pope Eugene III., as also in his letter to the people of Thoulouse, refers to the miracles which God enabled him to work.§ But the reader should refer to the eloquent pages of Goerres for proof and illustration.|| What might not be said also on the miracles of St. Francis Xavier, and on those of St. Philip Neri, St. Francis de Sales, St. John Francis Regis, and numberless others? At one time, two thousand persons afflicted with different maladies, came to the convent of the Recollects in Horta, to beseech Salvator, a poor Catalan lay brother, to pray for them: after they had all made their confession and communion, he blessed them in the name of the holy Trinity, and they were all healed the same hour.¶ Twenty two bishops of Languedoc wrote to Pope Clement XI. in these terms, "We are wit-

nesses that before the tomb of Francis Regis, the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb speak."

We need not multiply instances. Let us, however, hear St. Ouen, recording a miraculous cure in his own age, in verification of the divine promise, that he who believes in Christ shall do the works which he did; for the passage will show the spirit with which all operations of this kind were believed to be effected. During the anniversary celebration of St. Denis at Paris, while vigils were chaunting in the choir, Eligius entered the temple, and saw a man with limbs contracted, lying at the sepulchre of the saint. Moved with charity, he went up and inquired from him how long he had been lame, and the cause of his disease, and asked him whether he had hope in Christ, if he believed that he could be cured, if he believed that he would rise from death and receive a recompense according to his works; and when the other replied that he believed all this, then said Eligius why do you lie here any longer—do you believe that this saint can obtain from God the cure of your malady? If then you do so believe, promise to the Lord that from henceforth you will serve him, and if you have firm faith the Lord will heal you. Then Eligius knelt upon the ground and prayed, with eyes and hands raised to heaven, calling upon our Saviour Jesus Christ: and then turning to the sick man he took him by the hand, and desired him to rise up in the name of Jesus, and the sick man immediately felt strength in his joints, and he arose and was healed from that hour.

Goerres has written a most remarkable chapter on the miraculous healing of the sick in general, in the Catholic Church;* but we cannot delay to hear it. I shall only observe that passages like the above, appeared to the count of Stolberg to contain the strongest internal evidence of truth. When relating the answer of Pope Gregory to St. Augustin, who had sent him an account of the miracles which he had wrought in England, this profound philosopher says, "it seems to me that the Apostolic manner in which Gregory regarded miracles, places beyond a doubt the authenticity of those which he records as having occurred in his time."† The point of attack will now perhaps be changed, and we shall be told that eye-witnesses cannot be credited

* Ric. S. Vic. de Trinit. i.

† Mabill.

‡ Geof. in vit. Bern. § De Consideratione.

|| Die Christliche Mystik, i. 251.

¶ Il. 212.

* Die Christliche Mystik, i. 385.

† Life of Alfred, chap. 3.

when they affirm that they have seen such things.

"They had a passage for a time, will some one say," quoting Lord Bacon, "by the ignorance of the people, the superstitious simplicity of some, and the politic toleration of others, and came to be esteemed but as old wives' fables, impostures of the clergy, and badges of Antichrist." This is a side on which the ancient philosophers would not have ventured to make an assault. "It cannot be," says Plato, "that faith ought not to be placed in the sons of the Gods, even although they may speak without probable and invincible demonstrations." "Truly," says Socrates, "it is not easy to refuse assent to what Simonides says, for he is a wise and a divine man."* What then would these philosophers have thought of persons, who should refuse to credit such men as St. Bernard and St. Francis Xavier, and refuse too on the very ground of their being divine men? Yet this is the argument of the moderns. "Men were religious," say they, "and anxious to uphold religion by every means; or they were religious, and, therefore, liable to delusions." Another difficulty presents itself to them. "If miracles did take place, all the world, they conclude, would have known it, and every one would have heard of it." But can they be so sure of this? Here, again, facts overthrow their arguments. Immediately before attesting as an eye witness, the miracles which had been lately wrought, St. Augustin says, "miracles are now indeed wrought by his name, by the sacraments or prayers, or by the memorials of his saints; but they are not illustrious with the same brightness as those related in the gospels, because the canon of the holy Scriptures being spread every where and recited, all nations know them; but when these miracles occur, they are scarcely known in the very city itself in which they pass, for generally very few persons know of them, the rest being ignorant of their occurrence, especially if it be a great city, and when they are related to others elsewhere, there is no such authority to substantiate them as to make them to be credited without doubt or difficulty, although they are related by faithful Christians to faithful Christians."†

Might not one suppose that this referred to what was every day passing in our own times in various parts of Europe? The

same apathy appeared during the middle ages. Wandalbert, deacon and monk of Prumens, writing in the ninth century, says in the prologue to his life of St. Goar, addressed to the abbot Marcuard, "to attest the merits of the saints, so many miracles continue to be wrought, as in the first ages, that in consequence of their frequent occurrence, men no longer regard them with admiration."* Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, says in the prologue to his book on Miracles, "that he used often to feel indignant that no one should ever think of writing down a record of the miraculous events which were occurring in his time, and that it was that consideration which tempted him to set about removing the deficiency."†

Sometimes a fear of offending God by silence compelled men to speak of miracles, which fell under their own observation. "Thus," one ancient writer says, "it would be tedious to relate each of the miracles and wonders that God has wrought in this monastery of König Sael, in Prague, since its foundation: many are written, but more have been omitted and have perished from the memory of men; yet some things which I have myself seen, and which have been proved perfectly by others, and which I dare not pass over, and cannot with a safe conscience, I will note here, for I have been in this monastery from my youth."‡

"I certainly think," says Marsilius Ficinus, "that to us undeserving, certain miraculous signs have been divinely given, but all things are not shown to all; many also are not written down, or if written, are not credited, in consequence of some wicked and detestable men imitating miracles. I have heard of some miracles in our own time, and in our city of Florence, which are to be believed. Do not be surprised my Lorenzo, that Marsilius Ficinus studious of philosophy, should introduce miracles; for the things of which we write are true, and it is the duty of a philosopher to confirm every thing by its own proper kind of argument."§ While history attests the fact, philosophy and faith explain why miracles should not excite a more general and permanent impression. "What is astonishing amongst men, with respect to miracles," says Cardan, is the fact, "that when they are present, or a little after they

* Acta S. Ord. S. Bened. tom. ii.

† De Mirac. Lib. i.

‡ Gaspar Jongelinus Notitiæ Abbot. Ord. Cisterciensis. per Univ. Orb. Lib. v. 30.

§ Mars. Ficin. de Christiana Religione, cap. x.

* De Repub. i.

† De Civit. Dei, Lib. xxii. 3.

have occurred, the whole man is attracted by them, but when grown cold, they are so attenuated, that unless you firmly fix and restore them as if with a nail, you will, as it were, doubt, whether you have seen or heard them. Quod reor maxime tum ob alias causas multo profundiores, accidere quam naturæ nostræ distantia à causis quæ illud efficiunt.* To silence respecting miracles, innumerable causes contributed. It would, perhaps, be difficult to describe the intellectual effects, resulting from them, in terms more exact than those of Plato, where he gives this caution. "Beware lest such things should be produced before undisciplined men; for, as it seems to me, than these no things sound more ridiculous to the common mass of mankind, or more admirable and full of divinity to those who are well constituted, σχεδὸν γὰρ, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, οὐκ ἔστι τούτων πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς καταγελαστότερα ἀκούσματα, οὐδ' αὖ πρὸς τοὺς εὐφρεῖς θαυμαστότερα τε καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικώτερα.†

The clean of heart in ages of faith, were impressed with the conviction expressed by Pindar, "that not every truth revealing its countenance clearly is profitable, and that the knowing how to keep silence is often the wisest thing among men."‡ They would, therefore, preface their account of miracles with "let it dwell darkly with you;" and, in fact, Guibert de Nugent will bear witness, that in the eleventh century there were in England some persons as ready to discredit miracles, and to impute them to artifice, as any that could now be found there, though it is true he represents them as men addicted to drunkenness, of no understanding in regard to the mysteries of God, and closing their course of audacious impiety by a bitter end, imitating Judas in their death.§ Many motives, indeed, rendered the clean of heart willing, rather to rest in the assurance of almighty power than to be the heralds, or even witnesses of its demonstration. Mabillon shows that the clergy of the seventh and eighth centuries were studious to conceal the event of any miracle which had been wrought in their churches; he cites a remarkable instance from the acts of St. Hildulf, of the bishop of Treves, and abbot of the Medianensian monastery, respecting their conduct, in consequence of the crowd of persons who were attracted thither by

the frequent miracles of St. Spinulus, lest they should be withdrawn from the royal road of regular discipline. Similar examples occurred at Rheims and at Clairvaux. The Sarlatensian monks being disturbed by the multitude of people, who came to the shrine of the holy abbot Pardulf, to witness the miracles, they actually translated the abbot's body into the church of St. John, without the monastery, that the crowd might be directed elsewhere. The abbot Rodulfus, in the first book of his Chronicle, after relating that in the last years of the life of the abbot Guntram, frequent miracles were wrought at the tomb of Lord Trudo, says that the abbot studiously endeavoured to conceal them, and alleged this reason, that signs were given to infidels, and not to the faithful, "which not long after," says the Chronicler, "some of ourselves experienced, who, in presence of these very miracles, did not fear to offend God."*

Peter the Venerable says, "that many miracles and extraordinary events were occurring in the holy order of the Carthusians, but that the humility of those saintly men made it very difficult to obtain information respecting them."† The Recollects of Horta brought a complaint before the provincial of their order against Salvador, the lay brother, in consequence of the miraculous cures which he performed; the peace of their convent was disturbed by the multitudes, who flocked to see him. The provincial commanded that his name should be changed, and that he should be sent at midnight to another monastery: popular commotions followed; he was removed successively to Barcelona, Saragossa, and the island of Sardinia, the people every where still discovering him, as if by instinct, while he continued healing all their diseases till his death, which occurred in the year 1567.‡ It was nothing new in England in the twelfth century, as a recent historian of the middle ages supposes, to evince a disposition rather to conceal than to publish miracles. This writer admits, that such a spirit existed long before on the continent. "The more aged monks of several monasteries," he says, "had received with coldness the intelligence of miraculous manifestations, even when they, as a community, must of necessity profit by them. They contended that tranquil-

* Hieron. Cardan de Vita Propria, cap. 43.

† Epist. ii.

‡ Nem. od. v.

§ Guibert Novigent. de Vita Propria, Lib. iii. c. xi.

* Præfat. in III. Sæcul. Benedict. § vii.

† De Miraculis, Lib. ii. c. 29.

‡ Goerres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 212.

lity, seclusion, and prayer, were the first obligations of a monk; but how could these obligations be fulfilled if crowds of people were to flock daily to visit the shrine of a sainted inmate?"*

Moreover, faith, as we shall see at the close of this volume, imparted a vision to the clean of heart, which obscured the lustre of miracles, and rendered them even unwilling to behold them. Voltaire said he would go to the world's end to see a miracle; but when he had beheld one, there is no great probability that it would have effected any prodigious change in his psychological condition. It is by no means certain, that he would have obtained a mind like that of St. Louis, who did not wish to see a miracle. Joinville ascribes to the count of Montfort the answer which others attribute to that holy king, who, on being invited to remove to a distance of a few miles to see a miraculous host, replied, that he had no need of miracles to believe in the real presence. Such was the spirit of men in ages of faith. St. John of the Cross, in like manner, declined going to see a nun at Lisbon, who was said to be miraculously inspired, saying, "I want no fresh motives of credibility; they would diminish the merit of my faith little as it is; it is enough for me to know what Jesus Christ teaches, and what our holy mother, the Roman Church, which cannot deceive, proposes to us." "It is related of a certain holy father," says St. Bonaventura, "that when the devil appeared to him in the form of Christ, he shut his eyes and said that he did not wish to see Christ in this life."† St. John of the Cross would not suffer spiritual persons to indulge in the desire of witnessing miraculous operations, and he used to cite St. Thomas, whose maxim was, that the desire of visions and other signs is a want of faith,‡ an observation verified, perhaps, more remarkably at present, in these grand expounders of the apocalypse, who are always pretending to discover the times and the seasons, as if they fancied themselves prophets. The scholastic and mystic guides of the middle ages used to warn men to refrain from inquiries respecting the end of the world, and the coming of Antichrist, lest they should evince the presumption which was reproved by our Saviour.§

The belief of men in the reality of miracles, however, was not the less steadfast, in consequence of their rejecting the spirit of curiosity in matters of faith; and it only remains to show that the very Catholicity of their views obliged them to possess it, since they could not entertain doubts respecting their possibility, without taking a partial view of human and divine things. Their histories, we are told, are full of attestations of strange, amazing instances of the immediate interference of God in the affairs of men; they abound with wonders. The reply of these authors to such objectors would, I think, have been very short. They would have deemed it sufficient to repeat Pindar's words, Ἦ θαυμάσια πολλά.* We deny it not. The life of man is full of wonders. Theirs was strictly in this respect the Platonic style. "What you say seems most incredible; but, nevertheless, it is necessary to admit it."† I said in the beginning that the clean of heart saw God, in the apparent deviations from the laws of nature; for, in fact, what ground have we for considering miracles as different from the other manifestations of the Supreme Ruler? It is in appearance, not in reality, that they differ from his ordinary laws of action. Plato speaks of it as a kind of blasphemy, to talk like ignorant people, of wandering stars, alluding to celestial bodies, as if they did not follow a certain law, whereas each has its appointed course; and his remark, is applicable to miracles, "for, if," saith he, "in the Olympic games, those who follow the longest course should be called the slowest, because they are not in with those who take a shorter way, would it not be an injustice and an error? and when we err in the same manner speaking of divine things, are we not ridiculous and blind?"‡

We may not be able to trace the connection, but it is in the order of Providence that such effects should be produced, from time to time, without the co-operation of secondary causes. With respect to that general incredibility of all miracles which some imagine, the objection hardly deserves a reply. "Neither are they to be heard," says St. Augustin, "who deny that the invisible God can work visible miracles since he made the world."§ What insane arrogance, or rather, indeed, what a want of thought when man refuses to

* Lardner's Cyclop. vol. iv. 76. + III. Sent. d. 5.

‡ III. P. Q. 43. art. 1. ad 3.

§ St. Bonavent. de Sept. Grad. vit. Spiritual. cap. 79.

* Olymp. i.

† De Legibus Lib. i.

‡ Leges, Lib. vii.

§ De Civ. Dei, Lib. x. 12.

believe that miracles can occur. It was but as yesterday that the oldest came into the world, from which he will, as it were, in a moment, be taken to the invisible world; and during the short space which intervenes, though he can trace the operation of general laws, he cannot be sure that he has discovered a thousandth part of their number, or that the most apparently trivial and isolated fact does not arise from the action of a general law, of which he knows nothing: even during this moment of observation, while drawing breath between two eternities, the commonest thing is quite as strange as the uncommonest, only habit blunts his sense. Therefore, after showing how few common things can be perfectly explained, St. Hilary exclaims, "O man! why so much resignation in thy ignorance, when it is respecting the things which thou touchest? Why so much insolence when the question is concerning what relates to the nature of God?"* "If we should wish," says a German philosopher, "to do away with all miracles, at which the people wonder, whether it be extraordinary things, or things of which we cannot understand the connection, yet nature herself is full of miracles, and the real existence of things is to us a miracle." "The first man," says Novalis, "is the first seer of spirits; to him every thing appears as spirit. What are children but first men? The fresh glance of the child is more abundant than the perception of the most penetrating seer."†

In the order of grace, things equally wondrous are happening around us every day, only they strike us not, because we regard them with fleshly eyes, obscured by habit, and not with those of faith. All that appears so admirable in the lives of the saints, might be found in actual operation at present, if men had not learned the art of plucking the soul out of all human things; the same events take place, but are designated by different expressions. Neither can it be denied that the clean of heart beholding God, saw more, believed more than other men, and that they wished others to see and believe with them. One of the rules of Pious of Mirandola is, *De Deo credere omnia summa, idemque cupere ut omnes credant*. They did not write like the moderns, because they doubted and disbelieved, but they might have said, with holy David, "Credidi, propter quod locutus sum." Physical science even warned phi-

losophers from distrusting what such men saw, on the ground that it was not revealed to fleshly eyes. "All true things in the world are invisible," says Marsilius Ficinus, "all visible things in the world are only shadows of things."* "The unknown holy world," as Novalis remarks, "the higher world, is nearer to us than we commonly suppose. Already here we live in it, and we see it interwoven with the earthly nature."† *Ubi cor, ibi oculus*—where the heart was in heaven, the eyes saw God. "Proud and animal men," says Louis of Blois, "not perceiving or understanding the things which are of the spirit of God, condemn these holy books, and say that these revelations are only the dreams of women: for they know not with what familiarity God joins himself to the humble soul, as appears in the books of the blessed virgins, and widows, Gertrude, Mechtild, Hildegard, Elizabeth, and Brigit."

The clean of heart, in ages of faith, felt that the city of God on earth was as manifestly filled with the divine presence, as in the days of its first establishment. St. Augustin had addressed this admonition to the Church: "*Ne putes te desertam quia non vides Paulum, quia non vides Petrum, quia non vides illos per quos natus es. De prole tua crevit tibi paternitas; pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii, constitues eos principes super omnem terram.*" In effect the subsistence of the Catholic Church around them was a standing miracle, no less wondrous than those which first were wrought to make manifest the Son of God. The reply which Dante made to a blest spirit, who asked how he knew that the miracles were such as they are said to have been, might have been extended to express this: "that all the world," said he, "should have been turned to Christian, and no miracle been wrought."

Would, in itself, be such a miracle,
The rest were not an hundredth part so great.‡

That all nations should have been preserved in one religion, that a unity of spirit, a unity of doctrines should have been maintained so long, and men innumerable with angel minds have believed that miracles were wrought around them, and no miracle been wrought, would have been not, indeed, a miracle in Christian sense, but the mar-

* De Trin. Lib. ii. † Schriften, ii. 291.

* Epist. Lib. vi. ad Lactariu Nerone.
‡ Schriften, ii. 180. § Par. xxiv.

vellous of Calvin, that is to say, an absolute impossibility.

"He is wise," exclaims Pindar, "who knows many things by nature, but they who learn by means of labour and application are vehement in garrulity, and like crows caw out vain things against the divine bird of Jove."* The Pythagorean poet seems to have had a deeper meaning than Aristides of Miletus supposes, who comments upon the passage. There is a fountain of analogies for the universe, and those whom grace divine, under any form, had guided in the contemplation of nature, have discovered it, without forfeiting the character which Pliny so admired in a student, "quanta in sermone cunctatio!" while self-sufficient curious observers, who seem to think with Anaxagoras of old, that the wisdom and understanding of men result from their having hands,† who say miracles are past, and with the same breath, perhaps, as philosophical persons make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless, require continually to hear the count's admonition to Bertram, "be check'd for silence, but never tax'd for speech." "In the writings of the former," as Novalis remarks of many old books, "there beats a mysterious pulse, which shows the point of contact with the invisible world." Evidently as the clean of heart advanced on the way of this mortal life, they grew more full of incredibility as respected men, and more full of confidence in God. Many things passed around them—many things they heard, they saw, which, as St. Augustin says of the time when God creates human souls, "they would much rather learn than presume to teach." "If their reason could not at all times instantly refute,—their faith," as St. Augustin says, "enabled them to despise the objections of the impious,‡ while guarding with a pious mind the precepts of the blest."

Εὐσεβεί γράμα φυλάσσω
τες Μακάρων τελετάς.§

Ancient authors desire us to mark the two questions addressed to the angel, and their different reception: Zacharius said, "whereby shall I know this?" for there are circumstances to make me believe this cannot be. Here, say they, is the pride of knowledge, and a dependence on philosophy; but Mary said fearfully, and in doubt,

what manner of salutation this could be—how shall this be? She seeks not knowledge, but to have her alarm dispelled and her modesty preserved. Boyle has entitled one of his essays thus remarkably—"of man's great ignorance of the uses of natural things; or that there is no one thing in nature whereof the uses to human life are yet thoroughly understood," yet the garrulous men whom Pindar compares to crows, reject miracles, because, they say, they cannot see their use—they cannot believe that the Divinity would interpose for purpose unimportant; but their ridicule of Catholics only proves their own inconsistency, and alarms not its objects, for they can say, with St. Augustin, "in ipsum Christum non crederemus, si fides nostra similes cachinnos metueret."* Did not Almighty God exert his omnipotence, for what appears a trifle, when he filled the widow's cruse with oil?† The gentle Champier supplied them with an answer, when, in his doctrinal of a father training his son to all perfection, he says of those who pry into divine secrets,

"Las! nous pouvres créatures
Folles, corruptibles ordures,
N'appartient en nulle manière
Que de rien que Créateur fasse
Nul ayt si hardye face
Que la cause en rien enquierre."

"The will of God ought to suffice to us for reason," says St. Anselm, "when he does any thing, although we may not be able to discern why he so wills."‡ We cannot see what object could be answered by the miracles recorded in the history of the ages of faith; but can we see the object answered by every part of the visible nature around us? Doubtless, we should find that important ends are produced by the meanest particle of creation, if we could only see the totality, but, as Montaigne says, "man knows the whole of nothing." The most strange manifestation of Almighty power attested in records, can never be rejected as incredible, on philosophical grounds, on the score of its apparent inutility, for the true philosopher would only ask with Dante, "Is this

A preparation, in the wondrous depth
Of thy sage counsel, made for some good end,
Entirely from our reach of thought cut off?"§

If, like Hiero, the chatterer had asked

* Olymp. ii. † Plutarch de Amicit. 2.
‡ De Civ. Dei, xii. 17. § Olymp. iii.

* Epist. 102.
† Cur Deus Homo, 8.

‡ Reg. ii. 4.
§ Purg.

the man of faith how such things were done? He, in turn, I think, would have asked the delay of Simonides before answering; or rather he would have said, it is sufficient that they were done. "Who are we," asks St. Augustin, "to dispute about the works of God, and to say wherefore this and that? this is ill—this is wrong. If you enter into an iron forge you do not dare to criticise the anvil, or the bellows; but, if without skill in that trade, the mere consideration of man induces you to say, "not without some cause are these things thus arranged, the artist knows, wherefore, though I know not. In a forge you would not dare to condemn the workman, and in the world you dare to reprehend God?"*

The character of the true philosopher, we are told by a man of illustrious name in science in modern times, is to hope all things not impossible, and to believe all things not unreasonable. He who has seen obscurities, which appeared impenetrable in physical and mathematical science, suddenly dispelled, and the most barren and unpromising fields of inquiry converted, as if by inspiration, into rich and inexhaustible springs of knowledge and power on a simple change of our point of view, or by merely bringing to bear on them some principle which it never occurred before to try, will, surely, we may affirm, from the principles of this philosopher, be the very last to acquiesce in any of the modern objections to the belief of the clean of heart in ages of faith, on the ground of its admitting the reality of miraculous operations. The Pythagoreans esteemed as fools the men who were incredulous, and who supposed that God could do some things but not others. They used frequently to repeat the beginning of an heroic poem ascribed to Linus:—

"Ἐπισσθαί χρῆ πάντ' ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδέν ἀεπ-
τον"

"Ῥᾶδια πάντα θεῶ τελέσαι, καὶ ἀνέγνωτον οὐδέν"†

To disbelieve nothing wonderful that may be related of the Gods, or concerning the divine doctrines,‡ was one of their symbolic maxims, which Pindar proclaims with a tone of personal conviction, saying, "To me nothing that is wonderful, done by the divine power, seems incredible."§ Such was the spirit of the wisest men in the ancient world. We may truly apply Cicero's

words to these views, and say, "vetera jam ista, et religione omnium consecrata;" and certainly it is not from the Christian revelation that men of these latter times have learned to hold a different language, and to adopt instead that questioning spirit evinced by the Jews of Capernaum, when Christ first announced to mortal ears the great mystery of his love. Formerly, as Aristarchus said, there were hardly seven wise men in the world; but at present, as in his time, the difficulty would be to find seven who are content to pass for common mortals. The boasted diffusion of intelligence seems to consist in every one preferring his own incredulity to the faith of many generations of the human race, and feeling that it would be a disparagement of his understanding to suppose that he could credit any history attesting a miraculous event. Yet it was not from having never weighed such objections, but from having duly estimated them, that the great men of former ages refused to subscribe to the modern opinions. St. Augustin knew the men well, "quibus tota regula credendi est consuetudo cernendi;" and to go back farther still, the sages of Greece rejected them as crimes. "It is the custom of the wicked," said Empedocles, "to wish to vanquish truth by incredulity."

Indeed, when heathens, who knew not God, could yet discern the intimate relation in which all things in this visible frame of nature stood to him, there is but little ground for boasting of an intellectual progress, in the fact that, after the light of Christ has risen, philosophers persuade themselves that He, who makes it his delight to be with the children of men, and whose mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him, must have confined all his favours to the saints of the ancient law. Assuredly, as Tournon remarks, it is not consistent with the principles of a Christian to deny, without examination of evidence, the truth of such records as those which attest the graces vouchsafed to the Angel of the School.

"I cannot believe," you say, "that he heard a divine sound conveying ideas to his intelligence, or that any mortal could behold the spirits of another world and hear that indescribable voice which came, it is said, to Jerome Gratian, the Carmelite, while reciting matins.* I cannot believe that prayer should work miracles. I cannot believe that the touch of relics, vestments, or medals

* Tract. in Ps. 148.

† Jamb. de Pyth. Vita, cap. 28.

‡ Jamblich. Adhort. ad Philos. cap. 21.

§ Pyth. od. X.

* Bona de Discretionis Spirituum, viii.

should cure a diseased limb." "What meanest thou?" would men of faith have said in answer; "What can thy words avail? They cast on all things surest, brightest, best, doubt, insecurity, astonishment." Truly, of these men, who thus exalt incredulity into a principle, one might affirm in the language of the poet,—

οὐ δὴ τις αἶα τοῦτ' ἐπύχεται γένος
τρίφρου' ἀνατρί, μὴ μεταστῆναι πόνων.*

No land ever boasted of having nourished such a race without finding, in the end, cause for bitter groans.

But what then? Are all the recorded miracles of the middle ages to be credited; and is every miracle to be believed because it is not impossible? The clean of heart, in ages of faith, were placed in no such dilemma. Their maxim was thus expressed by Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remi, "vitium est omnibus credere et nulli."† This will appear from only reading the judicious remarks of Tournon, on the golden legend of James de Voragine. The illustrious Berenger de Landere, general of the Dominicans, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and archbishop of Compostello, commissioned Bernard Guido to separate the fables from the truth in this collection, which was a mere compilation from ancient legends. Melchior Canus attacked it severely; and his critical remarks on legends in general are well deserving of perusal:‡ at the same time it is improbable that the favour obtained by this work was owing to its relations being credited: its merit was understood to consist chiefly in its allegorical nature; so that when reduced to history, in a corrected edition, it was no longer sought after.

We must, however, observe, that, in the middle ages, men complained loudly that some legends were superstitiously written. Guibert de Nogent, in the eleventh century, speaks of false narratives, and of true legends, which are written in such a patched and hobbling style, that they are believed to be false. "What edification," he exclaims, "can the rotation of these fables, worse than any screeching wheels, bring to pious ears, which even can suggest incentives of blasphemy to the impious?"§ Mabillon complains, in like manner, of innumerable little narrations inserted by modern writers

into the lives of saints, the extravagance of which is, to his mind a subject of excessive grief.* No doubt, as a recent historian remarks, many absurd accounts, which disfigure the histories of eminent saints, and which are not found in the contemporary writers, were the invention of men in subsequent times. This arose from error rather than from a wish to adorn. "With respect to these legends," says this historian, "charity is the best philosophy. Many were not known during the lives of the persons whose deeds they recount; after their deaths they were multiplied and disfigured." In the ancient lives of St. Romain, bishop of Rouen, there is no mention of his vanquishing a serpent: not even writers of the twelfth century allude to it; but as his victory over idolatry was represented under that symbol, later authors mistook the emblem for a reality. Similarly the Parisians, in later ages, supposed that St. Marcel had slain a dragon, being misled by the ancient symbolical representations of his triumphs over Satan. In the old lives of St. Remi there is no notice of the saint Ampoule, which was not mentioned till after four hundred years. So also, in the ancient lives of St. Denis, there is no account of his carrying his head, which was first mentioned by Hilduin about seven hundred years after his time.† Another modern historian, after showing that no intimation of many strange things in the life of St. Dunstan occurs in the more ancient writings, which minutely record his acts and miracles, concludes with this remark, "The truth is, that nobody would ever have thought of disregarding the canons of criticism, of passing over writers nearly contemporary to follow those much posterior, had not the latter offered some foundations, however frail, for an attack on this calumniated archbishop." No one produced the original records.

The Saxon annalist says, "In this year all the chief nobility of England fell at Calne from an upper floor, except the holy archbishop Dunstan, who was standing on a beam; and some were much maimed, and some did not escape with life." Such is the foundation for the charge echoed by modern writers, who accuse him of murder, and of pretending a miraculous interposition in his own favour. It can be hardly necessary to add, that the credibility of any particular miracle was estimated according

* Æsch. Eumen. 58. + Epist. Lib. vii. 9.

† De Locis Theolog. Lib. ii. c. 10.

‡ Guibert Nov. de Fignoribus Sanct. Lib. i. c. 1.

* De Studiis Monast. p. 11. c. 8.

† Floquet, Hist. du Privilège de St. Romain.

to the weight of evidence in its support. None were received as genuine by the ecclesiastical authority, excepting after the most impartial and rigid scrutiny.

The Irish synod of the eighth century went so far as to say, "The testimony of a woman is not to be received, as the apostles did not receive the testimony of women respecting the resurrection of Christ."* "Some see visions in their imagination," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "and some pretend that they see visions; in some they are the preludes of insanity, and in others they arise from a confusion of the senses, which makes them believe truly that they see something when they see nothing: and when visions are true, they prove no man holy; for otherwise Balaam would have been holy, and his ass too, which saw the angel."† "Charity," says Richard of St. Victor, "humility, patience, and the other virtues, make man perfect—not miracles."‡

The prudence with which mystical authors guarded the mind from all delusion connected with a groundless belief in particular revelations, may be witnessed in the spiritual works of the blessed John of the Cross, the first barefooted Carmelite, and the director of St. Theresa. Gerson,§ Picus of Mirandula,|| Cardinal Laurentius Brancatus,¶ Cardinal Bona,** Castaldo de Alasio,†† Joannes Rusbroch,‡‡ Henricus of Urimaria,§§ Dominicus Gravina,||| Thy-

ræus*, and Goërres,† have all written to explain on what ground the belief in divine visions may be secure.

Guibert de Nogent, in the eleventh century, while attesting that he had seen with his own eyes many prodigies performed by Louis VI., curing scrofulous bodies on the neck and other parts with his touch, added to the sign of the cross humbly made, and observing that the power had been lost by his father Philip through his sins, takes care to show at length how little argument can ever be drawn from miracles.‡ Every one was free to exercise his own judgment respecting each occurrence, and it is highly improbable that any were generally admitted as miraculous upon insufficient grounds. A late French writer remarks, that King Charles III. of Spain, whom no one could suspect of credulity, was firmly convinced of the miraculous liquefaction of St. Januarius's blood at Naples, from his having expressly made it the object of his study while reigning in that city.§ The same result is continually obtained; but if what the Psalmist saith, in passing, of every man, were proved to-morrow, by a deliberate verdict, true of all whom Naples hath seen for centuries past encircling her altars, we should still have to recur to Pindar's conclusion; for after all our criticism and mockery we can never reverse it:—*Ἡ θάνατος πολλά.* Yes, let science recognise its bounds. There are problems to solve which humility and love alone can supply the artifice, when we are called to see what of his grace high God hath willed.

* Lib xvi. cap. 3. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. ix. + Serm. x.

† In Can. Cantic.

§ De Distinctione Visionum.

|| De Fide. ¶ De Oratione.

** De Discretionem Spirituum.

†† De Potestate Angelica.

‡‡ De Ornat. Spirit. Nupt. ii.

§§ De Spiritibus. ||| Lapis Lydius.

* De Apparit.

† Die Christ. Mystik. ii. 380.

‡ De Pignoribus Sanct. i. c. 1.

§ Tableau de l'Espagne, ii. 314.



CHAPTER XIII.



HAVING shown that the blessed clean of heart beheld God in the extraordinary manifestations which all history attests, we enter upon a path which is far from presenting an agreeable vista ; for we are to inquire respecting men who, though evidently impure and ignorant, no less sought and professed to behold Him in operations of a supernatural order : and for this purpose we must engage in a brief investigation of the superstitions of the middle age—a complicated and even dangerous subject, yet, strange to confess, inviting, like those waters of the Mincio, which from a distance are so tempting to the eyes of youth upon a sultry day, but into which, upon approaching, we almost fear to plunge, so dark and interwoven are the tall entangled reeds which line the Mantuan shore.

In the Sixth Book we refuted the charge of superstition advanced against the morality of the ages of faith ; and our present task is to explain in what manner the superstitions relative to the belief of men, which unquestionably then existed, can be reconciled with the action of that philosophy which no less incontestably prevailed at the time.

The question here is confined within narrow limits, and might be dismissed after a few words ; since the only point for us to prove is the repugnance of the Catholic philosophy to all superstition, which assuredly could be done without engaging in a long discourse. But as the objects that must necessarily come into view are in themselves curious, and capable of imparting much instruction relative to the general history of the human mind, it will be well, perhaps, to remain for a short space upon this ground, and to explore a little through its darksome wilds, though it will lead us far from the beatitude of the holy.

There have been, from the earliest ages of the world, two races of men, and, if one may so express it, two kinds of faith and mysticism corresponding to them : the workers of evil, believing in the power of evil, and worshipping it ; the workers of good, believing in the supreme good, and adoring

it. To both was common the desire of beholding a power superior to their own, and supreme. The pure and the impure sought to behold their God : the former to behold Him from whom they derived all sanctity, truth, and justice ; the latter his antagonist, or him who was the source of that wide and terrible dominion which is founded upon evil.

Man, in his freedom, placed between the two kingdoms, finds in the good, congenial with his original nature, bonds which connect him with the realm of light, and in sin, which has been introduced into his nature, others which associate him with the powers of darkness. The choice he makes between moral light and darkness determines whether it be to the demoniac, or to the divine mysticism that he devotes his life : if he choose the good, then the mysticism of light flows to him from a divine source ; if it be the bad on which his election falls, then he sinks down by a precipitous descent, ever lower and lower to the abyss. In the event of the former choice, how he endeavoured to attain to this vision, we have already partly seen ; in that of the latter, how he proceeded in the hope of realizing his wishes, can only be learned from penetrating into the sombre depths of those hideous histories which record the demoniac traditions of the impious, and the misery of those generations which felt their power ; for, as from the good choice resulted religion and true philosophy, so from the evil arose idolatry, sorcery, and all the horrid rites and detestable errors which are eminently found in the history of pagan times, and which can be met with likewise in all ages, and under all circumstances, wherever the true worship of God and the true philosophy have been abolished or interrupted. Faith and superstition are, therefore, not, as is often supposed by superficial writers, analogous and friendly, but, on the contrary, antagonist and hostile principles, eternally separate, and opposed to each other as essentially as good and evil. The history of Christian ages is, therefore, a history of the contest of these two rivals, who each endeavour to win the affections of the

human race; and during the period to which our investigations are chiefly directed, we shall find it steadily pursued, and presenting all the results which would necessarily arise from such a struggle, where those on both sides possessed a perfect self-consciousness and a clear knowledge of their relative position.

During the middle ages, the men who waged war against the Church, either with violent arms or with the subtilty of a false wisdom, were all addicted to superstition in some form or other. Fitz Eustace need not have wondered as he did at the conduct of his Lord Marmion, on the night when they lodged in the hostel:—

“Wonder it seem’d, in the squire’s eyes,
That one, so wary held, and wise—
Of whom ’twas said he scarce receiv’d
For gospel what the church believ’d—
Should, stirr’d by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Array’d in plate and mail.”

Julian believed, with Herod, in the transmigration of souls, and that he had been Alexander the emperor. Frederick II., who disdained the wisdom of the Church, had always some Arabian astrologers at his side, without whose advice he undertook nothing. Wallenstein, who disdained the exercises of piety, had recourse to the stars to learn what would be the success of his projects. Eccelino, who was a heretic as well as a persecutor of monks, and as such condemned by the Church, had astrologers always with him, calculating and divining, by whose advice he used to give battle: he had Master Salio, a canon of Padua, Riprandino of Verona, Guido of Bonato, and Paul the Sarassin, with a long beard, who came from Baldach and the remote regions of the east.* When enveloped at the bridge of Cassiano, over the Adda, by a superior force, he shuddered; for his astrologers had told him that this place would be fatal to him. The last ruler who laid violent hands on the vicar of Christ believed in the occult powers of fate, and was known to have consulted Moreau the Chiromancian. In short, wherever the light of faith was withdrawn, an abundant growth of such errors followed. Melancthon seems to have reserved all his fixedness of belief for pagan superstition; so that an extraordinary overflow of the Tiber, and a mule being delivered of a foal with an ill-shapen foot, appeared to him as signs that something serious was at hand;

while the birth of a calf with two heads was an omen, he thought, of the approaching destruction of Rome by schism. The superstition of Luther was of the grossest kind: he says himself that he saw at Dessau a child who was born of the devil, and that he told the princes of Anhalt, with whom he was, that if he had command there he would have the child thrown in the Moldau, at the risk of being its murderer; but that the princes were not of his opinion. While marrying, at Torgau, the Duke Philip of Pomerania with the Elector’s sister, in the midst of the ceremony the nuptial ring fell to the ground; and he says that he had a sensation of terror, but that he said, “Hear, devil, this does not concern you!”^e

Striking, indeed, was the contrast between the English tribunals after the new opinions had been established by law, when women were weighed against church Bibles, to ascertain whether they should be burnt as witches, and the conduct of Catholic pontiffs, like Innocent III., who, when Philip of France alleged magical influence to excuse his remaining separate from his wife, replied to him in these terms:—“O dear son, if you would have us believe that magicians are in fault, you must first have recourse to prayer, alms, and the holy sacrifice, taking to you your spouse in faith and the fear of God; and then we shall see whether magicians can prevail.”†

While Italy beheld her philosophers coming to the aid of priests in denouncing superstition, England heard her immortal Bacon affirming that truth might be found in a well-regulated astrology. Indeed, wherever the new religious opinions had superseded divine faith, every horrible thing which the Catholic church had been for ages engaged in combating seemed to gain fresh vigour. De Foe’s account of the superstitions of the citizens of London during the plague in 1665, will furnish evidence enough: he confesses that he was himself inclined to regard the comet as the warning of God’s judgments. “The people were more addicted to prophecies and astrological conjurations, dreams, and old wives’ tales, than ever they were, before or since. Books frightened them terribly, such as Lilly’s Almanack, Gadbury’s Astrological Predictions, and the like. Next to these were the dreams of old women, or the interpretation of old women upon other people’s dreams; and these put abundance of people even out of their wits.” These unhappy men, who

* Monach. Paduani Chronic. Lib. ii.

e Michelet, Mém. de Luther, iii. 178.

† Hurter, Geschichte Inn. III. 120.

would not recognise God in the mystery of love present upon the altar, saw apparitions in the air—saw flaming swords coming out of a cloud—saw hearses and coffins in the sky, and heaps of dead bodies—saw ghosts upon the gravestones. "Now was the city filled with fortune-tellers, cunning men, and astrologers, and a wicked generation of pretenders to magic; and this trade grew so open, that it was common to have signs and inscriptions over doors—'Here lives a fortune-teller,' or 'astrologer'—'Here you may have your nativity calculated;' and the usual signs were Bacon's Brazen Head, or Mother Shipton, or Merlin's Head. Many were thrown into the dead cart with hellish charms hanging about their necks, such as the word *Abracadabra* formed in triangle or inverted pyramid."

The late author of *Letters on Demonology* thinks that Chaucer could not be serious in averring, that the fairy superstitions were obsolete in his day, since they were found current three centuries afterwards. Had he reflected upon the councils, the bulls of sovereign pontiffs, the exertions of the monks and friars, to whom Chaucer expressly ascribes the expulsion, at an early period, from the land of all such spirits, he would never have used such an argument. The superstitions and pagan rites which still linger on the banks of the Tamar and the Tavy, as well as in other parts of England, are rather a second harvest than the original crop untouched. A tribe of fortune-tellers is generally found among the ruins of Netley Abbey: are we to conclude, with this author, that the monks could not have suppressed that evil, because we find it there at the present day? The fact is, that superstition is a weed of quick growth, which is no sooner neglected than it sends up vigorous shoots. "Life is so tender and mysterious, so pliant and volatile, that there is no seed it will not readily receive; evil sprouts up and runs wild in it, and brings up the intoxicating grape from the nether world, and the wine of horror;" so that when the light of faith has failed, and the organization of the church become powerless, after three centuries it is not surprising that there should be an abundant harvest of all that the fiend most loves. Not only do the germs of every hideous thing still exist, but the same forms even return; for any one might suppose that Jamblichus was describing the maxims of our peasants, instead of those of the Pythagoreans, when he speaks of their rule always to put on the right shoe first, and to wash the left foot first; and describes their

reverence for certain birds, and their attempt to cure diseases by incantations.*

Strange it is that man, who was designed to be the master and ruler of all the creatures of the earth, should have so lost his high privilege, and sunk down to nature, becoming, instead of its master, its slave; but as Frederick Schlegel observes, "This is the beginning of the history of the human race."†

Many works have been written on the downfall and extinction of paganism, but there remains still a vast field for future philosophers to explore, before one can feel fully satisfied. The different form which evil may assume has often deceived observers. Under its ancient colours it maintained the contest much longer than is generally supposed; and, hence, we are presented with a series of passages very important to an historian of the middle ages, which attest the efforts of the Catholic church to root out the pagan superstitions, of which many traces still remained. The superstitious regard to days and practices inculcated by Hesiod‡ was denounced as inconsistent with the Christian profession. "Who would believe," exclaims St. Augustine, "that it was a great sin to pay attention to months, and years, and seasons, as those do who wish or fear to begin certain things on certain months, because through a vain superstition they believe that there are happy and unhappy days, unless we were to estimate its enormity by the fear which the apostle expressed, which made him say, "Dies observatis, et menses et tempora et annos. Timeo vos, ne forte sine causa laboraverim in vobis."§ Hugo of St. Victor makes a similar remark, and cites the words of St. Augustine.|| And John of Salisbury argues, from the same text, the peril of superstition.¶ In the canonical letters of St. Basil it is ordained, that he who should apply to fortune-tellers or others, to learn their art, should perform a penance equal to that imposed for homicide.

In the seventh century, St. Ouen complained that pagan traces could be still met with among the people of Rouen, on his arrival to take possession of that see. "I warn you," said the venerable man, "and I conjure you not to observe the customs of pagans; not to believe in magicians, or fortune-tellers, or sorcerers, or enchanters; not

* De Pyth. vit. 29.

† Philosophie der Geschichte, i. 38.

‡ Op. et Dies.

§ Enchirid. cap. xxi.

|| Sermo liii.

¶ De Nugis Curialium, Lib. i. c. 12.

to consult them for your diseases, or for any cause. Do not observe omens, or sneezing, or the cry of birds. Let no Christian pay regard to the day that he leaves his house, or to the day that he returns to it, for God has made them all. Let no one pay any attention to days or to moons in beginning any work. Let no one follow the impious and superstitious practices of the first of January; let no one invoke the name of demons, Neptune, Pluto, Diana, Minerva, or Geniuses; let no one go to any temple, or stone, or fountain, or tree, or open place, to burn tapers or accomplish a vow; let no one fasten ligatures to the neck of any man or beast; let no one make any lustration, or practise any enchantments on herbs, or pass any animal through a hollow tree or through an excavation in the earth; let no woman suspend amber to her neck; let there be no cries at the eclipses of the moon; and, above all, let no one ever utter an impure or luxurious word. Prohibit these diabolical games, these songs of the Gentiles; destroy these fountains, cut down these trees, burn these figures."* A capitulary of Charlemagne required the curates to oppose the worship at fountains and consecrated stones, which was still lingering from the time of the Druids. In the penitential canons of Rhaban Maur there are minute inquiries whether any one had offered sacrifices to the deities of old, or had made oblations to them near consecrated trees, fountains, and rocks.†

The tradition of the open war against paganism is still fresh in some places. The hymn sung in the church of Rouen on the festival of St. Mellon makes mention of the idol Roth, which had been destroyed by that saint in the neighbouring village, which is still called Mont Roth.‡ The councils had been obliged from time to time to raise their voice, and exert their authority, in this cause. That of Auxerre, in the year 578, prohibited many pagan superstitions, as did another in 590; and that of Lißines in 742, under St. Boniface and the protection of Caroloman, by which last it was decreed that a person who should be guilty of practising any pagan observance was to be condemned in the fine of fifteen solidi.

"We have desired, according to the canons," say these fathers, "that every bishop in his parish should be solicitous, with the aid of him who is the defender of his

church, that the people of God should refrain from every thing pagan, and should cast away all the abominations of the Gentiles."*

By the canons of the council of Orange, in 452, a bishop who should neglect to abolish the custom of adoring fountains, trees, and stones, is declared guilty of sacrilege. Pope Gregory, addressing all the people of the old Saxons, declaring himself a debtor to the wise and to the unwise, charges them to fly from all heathen observances, and from putting any trust in metals or in idols.† St. Martin would not even spare the great pine tree which the pagans had dedicated, and he caused it to be destroyed along with their temple.

With what care the Benedictine monks extirpated the idolatrous superstitions which prevailed in the Black Forest when they first colonized that region, may be seen in all histories of their order.‡ The crusaders, on taking Constantinople in 1204, found vestiges there of pagan superstitions and magical contrivance of old prepared. Here was a famed statue, formed with secret magic art by Apollonius of Tyana, as a safeguard of the city; for Constantine had transferred to it, among other pagan monuments, the palladium of old Rome, by which it would seem he had hoped to have imparted to it the fortune of the ancient city. These curious relics of pagan art were then destroyed, with many others.§

At the same time the zeal of men, in ages of faith, against paganism, was not a blind fanaticism; for it was compatible with their preserving whatever, in the ancient civilization, was capable of being purified or reconciled with Christian manners. Ambrose Leo, on occasion of mentioning a certain game celebrated at Nola, which he traces from their heathen ancestors, says, "Their Christian posterity, which always seems to have desired, by correcting, to preserve ancient things, and to transfer all things, as far as possible, to a good and holy use, was not disturbed by such spectacles, but rather left it for the service of religion, and as an innocent recreation for the people."|| That such customs as the gathering of mistletoe boughs at Christmas, in England and France, had descended from the Druids, was not deemed a sufficient reason for denouncing them as impure.

* Vita S. Eligii, Lib. ii. c. 15.

† Ap. Hartzheim Concil. Ger. ii.

‡ Taillepié, *Récueil des Antiquitez et Singularitez de Rouen*, 16.

* Can. V. † S. Bonifac. Epist. cxxi.

‡ Gerberti *Historia Nigræ Silvæ*, tom. i. passim.

§ Hurter, *Geschichte Inn.* III. i. 635.

|| Amb. Leo de Nola, Lib. iii. 12. ap. *Antiq. Ital. Thesaur.* tom. ix.

By the theological faculty of the university of Paris, in 1398, a thing was declared superstitious when the effects expected from it could not be reasonably ascribed either to God or to nature, which is his work.* A few passages from the writers of the middle age will show, as Marchangy observes, with what indefatigable solicitude, and yet with what a gentle hand and admirable prudence, religion sought to extirpate error, to banish ignorance, and to spread the light of truth. Let us hear John of Salisbury :—"Tiberius Cæsar," saith he, "having a dread of thunder, used always to surround his head with laurel when a storm came on, for that leaf was thought to repel lightning. But what makes a man more secure is, if he preserves the faith of the cross in his breast, and bears the justice of faith upon his head, and makes with an innocent hand the sign of the cross upon his forehead, having Him always before his mind who secures His worshippers from all fear of the world, saying to them, 'A signis cæli ne timueritis quæ timent gentes, quia ego vobiscum Dominus Deus vester.'"+ So, when a comet appeared and terrified the court of Louis le Debonnaire, as it was generally said to portend the change of kingdoms and the death of kings, his astronomer, who lived always in his palace, cited these words of the prophet to him; upon which the emperor replied, "True, we ought to fear no other star but Him, who is the Creator of this star as of ourselves."†

"Some affirm," says John of Salisbury, "that it is unlucky to meet a priest or other religious man; I also believe it to be pernicious to go against not only priests, but any wise men."§ "Whoever follows the vanity of dreams is little vigilant in the law of the Lord, and sleeps a pernicious sleep. Whoever exercises his credulity upon the prestiges of dreams, departs as much from the sincerity of faith as from the line of reason."||

Pope Innocent III. mentions, as one of the heavy charges against the King of Portugal, his custom of regarding it as a dire omen if he should meet a monk or a priest coming towards him, and his keeping a pythoness or witch, to the peril of his soul, consulting her daily, and refusing to dismiss her at the call of the bishop.¶ We may remark, that Cervantes makes the squire condemn the observance of omens on the authority of the village curate.

* Art. 3. de la Censure.

† De Nugis Curialium. Lib. i. c. 13.

‡ Vita et Actus Lud. Pii ap. Duchesne, tom. ii.

§ I. 13. ¶ Id. Lib. ii. c. 17.

¶ Epist. Lib. xiv. 8.

In the middle ages it was clearly recognised, that attention to omens was identical with the spirit of paganism. "The departure of King Don Sebastian with his fleet for Africa," says an old writer, "was as sad as if the issue had been foreseen by every one: for in such a crowd of men, of various conditions, embarking, no one was seen to smile as in common at the beginning of expeditions, but as if the sad end were visible to all, every one complained that he was led unwilling. The king, after going on board, remained eight days in the port without leaving the vessel: during all that time, such was the mournful silence throughout the whole fleet, that there was not once heard the sound of a pipe or flute. At the first moment of starting also, accidents occurred; so that, if one had had faith like the ancients in auguries, there was enough to discourage the boldest."*

Nor was the zeal of the ecclesiastics confined to the abolition of superstition, which wore the ancient form of the pagans. They pursued it with the same steadiness, under whatever colours it might assume, according to the progress of society and the social condition of mankind. By the canons of the council of Arles, in 476, clerks were forbidden, on pain of excommunication, to use any kind of divination, by drawing the lots of the saints and the holy Scripture. All divination was forbidden as a grievous crime, compounded of idolatry, heresy, incredulity, and ambition.† In the fourth book of the ordinances of Louis le Debonnaire, were prohibited the Virgilian lots;—"ut nullus in Psalterio vel Evangelio vel aliis rebus sortiri præsumat nec divinationes aliquas observare." Under the head of divination, in the Speculum Morale ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, is condemned all invocation of demons, all predictions by stones, or iron, or water, or fire, or air, or the stars; all regard to birds, the lines of men's hands, dreams, the letters or page first seen of a book, dice, the figures formed by melted lead in water:—"the folly of which," says the author, "is manifest; since no body, earthly or celestial, can make any impression upon the understanding or the will, and in these things one can only look for the causes of natural events." All castings of lots, and ecclesiastical election by lot, are forbidden; for if we read that St. Matthias was chosen by lot before Pentecost, as Bede remarks, it was because the plentitude of the Holy Ghost

* Hieron. Conestaggii de Portug. et Castel. conjunct. Lib. ii.

† Joan. Devoti. Instit. Canon. Lib. iv. tit. 13.

had not then been shed upon the church, for the seven deacons afterwards were not drawn by lot but elected. Though, if there be necessity, it is lawful with due reverence to implore the divine judgment by lot.*

Astrology was comprised in the anathema which the church pronounced against all erroneous conjectura., and vain sciences: its observations combined with magic were in great vogue, as may be witnessed in the books of Agrippa.† James of Toledo sent circular letters through the world, predicting, from astrological calculations, that in the year 1186 a mighty wind would arise from the west which would overthrow all things, so that men would have to take shelter in caverns; and, it is mentioned, that he alarmed many. One may remark, that these superstitions were clearly distinguished and resisted, even where there was a total ignorance of physical science. Isidore, who says that the sun, on dipping into the sea, goes by unknown ways under the earth till it reaches the east, evinces a sound and penetrating judgment in exposing the superstition of astrology; "the observations of which," he says, "are contrary to our faith, and ought to be so unknown to Christians that they should seem to have been never written down."‡ Hildebert of Mans wrote a poem in fifteen cantos against astrology, and the Angel of the School combats the same error in a tract, "De Judiciis Astrorum," in which he shows that it is a grievous sin to follow the judgment of the stars in things which depend upon the will of man.§ John of Salisbury remarks, that the mathematicians or astrologers err more dangerously even than the interpreters of dreams, since they seem to found their error on the solidity of nature and strength of reason: so they begin from truth, that they may precipitate their followers and themselves into the abyss of falsehood. "Astronomy," he continues, "is a noble and glorious science, if it restrain the student within the bounds of moderation; but if he pass beyond, through vanity, he becomes a disciple not so much of philosophy as of impiety." He then commences an elaborate demonstration of the error and danger of the astrologers, refuting them from the doctrine of providence, and of the freedom of the human will.||

The *ars notoria* is pronounced unlawful in the *Speculum Morale*, ascribed to Vincent, on the ground that, to acquire knowledge it makes use of things which have not of themselves the virtue of causing knowledge, such as the inspection of certain figures, or the uttering of unknown words; and, therefore, this is an art of signs, but not of signs divinely instituted, as are the Sacramental signs; therefore, these are empty signs, and, consequently, pertaining to certain compacts with demons; and, therefore, the art is to be wholly condemned and fled from by a Christian.*

Judicial astrologers were condemned, not only by the ecclesiastical, but also by the civil laws. St. Augustin mentions the expulsion of an astrologer from the church,† as does also St. Epiphanius. Magicians and malignant contrivers of diabolic art were excommunicated, and were to be punished with death, according to the laws of Constantine, without hope of pardon at Easter.‡

The terror which these inspired in the ancient world, and the enormous crimes associated with such professions, will explain this severity; yet it is certain that during the middle ages the infliction of capital punishment for such offences was rare. We find the ecclesiastical arm frequently stretched out to save suspected persons from the ferocity of the populace, and even from the cruelty of the civil tribunals. St. Agobart, bishop of Lyons in 833, besides writing a treatise against the popular opinion that storms were raised by certain enchanters, styled in the *Capitularies of Charlemagne* "*Tempestarii sive immissores tempestatum*," exerted himself to deliver three men and a woman from the mob, who were dragging them to put them to death for it; and not without great difficulty did he succeed. In the "*Speculum Morale*," ascribed to Vincent de Beauvais, there is an anecdote related of a priest who, being told by a certain old woman, who pretended to be a witch, that she and her companions had often entered his house at midnight in spite of all locks and bolts, led her into a chamber, and having locked the door, inflicted a severe chastisement, desiring her, at the same time, to exercise her sortilegious power, if she really possessed it, and escape.§

* Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. p. 111. dist. 27. + Lib. ii. c. 52.

† Isid. Etymolog. Lib. iii. § Opusc. xxvi. ‡ De Nugis Curialium, Lib. ii. c. 18-26.

* Spec. Mor. iii. Lib. iii. 27.

+ Tract. in Ps. 61.

‡ Joan. Devot. Lib. iv. tit. 14.

§ Spec. Mor. Lib. iii. p. 111. 27.

The punishment of such persons was very different after the establishment of the new religious opinions. It was not till 1562, under Elizabeth, that a formal statute against sorcery, as penal in itself, was passed in England. "The Church of Rome," says the author of *Letters on Demonology*, "was unwilling, in her period of undisputed power, to call in the secular arm to punish persons for witchcraft; a crime which could, according to her belief, be subdued by the spiritual arm alone: but wherever the Calvinist interest became predominant, a general persecution of sorcerers seemed a necessary consequence." He then relates the atrocious cruelties practised in Sweden, in the years 1669 and 1670; and in England, with sanction of the parliament, by Calamy, Baxter, and Hopkins—such men as Sir Matthew Hale and Sir Thomas Brown acquiescing; and he adds, "even the Indians were struck with wonder at the proceedings of the English against witches in New England, and drew disadvantageous comparisons between them and the French, among whom, they said, 'the Great Spirit sends no witches.'" Through the whole of the sixteenth, and the greater part of the seventeenth century, little abatement of such persecution can be traced in the kingdom.

But let us return to ages of faith. In the *Speculum Morale*, ascribed to Vincent, under the head of superstitious observances, we find condemned all attempts to discover truth by unknown letters or figures, or the notary art, the use of ligatures and medicaments depending upon charmed words or prayers without regard to their natural properties, the attempt to make use of diabolical agency, or to impart the power of it to others, all the thousand observances of natural events as predicting the future without regard to their natural effects, the suspending of sacred words to the neck, with the idea of there being a force in the words themselves to help them; for if the evangelic words profit them not when heard in their ears, how can they save them when hung from their neck. So that all is superstition in observances, which does not belong to the divine reverence: as if in hanging a reliquary, faith should be placed, not in God and in his saints, but in the form of the stone, as for example in its being triangular.*

Amulets and written charms, the use of

which prevails at the present day to such an extent in the east,* had been condemned, under pain of excommunication, by the council of Laodicea in the fourth century, and the censure of charms to ward off diseases was repeated by the council of Rome under Gregory II. in 712, by that of Milan, in 1565, and by that of Tours, in 1583. St. Charles, during the plague, according to the practice of the church in all previous times of calamity, prohibited with especial energy all inventions of superstition. Thus Pope Innocent the First would not suffer Honorius to employ the Tuscan astrologers and mathematicians in defending Rome against Alaric by their enchantments, but prevailed upon him to publish a severe law against them. The capitulary of Herard, bishop of Tours, in 858, imposed public penance on all persons who practised divination and sorcery. The ancient Roman Penitential prescribed a penance of seven years to all who applied to such arts. The Penitential of Theodore reduced the term to one year, or to a fast of three Lents. Bede, in his *Collection of Canons*,† and Pope Gregory III., prescribe a penance of from six months to three years to all who have had recourse to divinations, according to the extent of their fault. By the laws of the Visigoths in Spain, those who had recourse to sortileges or magic could not be received as witnesses.‡ Among the statutes of St. Boniface we read, the priest who practised any magical arts, or who interpreted dreams, is to be punished with the utmost severity of the canons;§ and in the ecclesiastical laws, collected by the Abbot Rhegino in the ninth century, we find that the bishop was to inquire whether any one dealt in magic, and whether there were any women who, by drugs or incantations, pretended to raise love or hatred.|| In the *Collection of Canons* published by D'Aichery, which date probably from the ninth century, we read, that he who practised magical arts, was to be deposed and confined during life in a monastery.¶

The horror which such practices inspired is well expressed in a poem taken from a life of St. Basil, ascribed to his contemporary St. Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium, of which a Latin version is given by Rosweyde in his *lives of the fathers*,

* Lane's *Mod. Egyptians*, l.

† C. xi.

‡ Lib. ii. tit. iv. 1.

§ Dacher. *Spicil.* ix.

|| Ap. Hartzheim *Concilia Germ.* ii.

¶ Can. 59. ex *Concilio Toletano.* iv. 29.

* Dist. 28. l. iii. n. 111.

describing the terror of the youth who is about to consult a wizard. The poet concludes with this terrible intimation ;—

“ And he could then almost have given
His fatal purpose o'er ;
But his good Angel had left him
When he entered the sorcerer's door.”

Burchard, bishop of Worms, at the beginning of the eleventh century, published many decrees prohibiting all kinds of superstition ; and at the end of the twelfth century, many councils imposed severe penances on those who had recourse to superstitious practices, though under the form of medicinal.* This included the superstitious wearing of precious stones to ward off diseases, which may be traced to Aristotle in his book on stones, and to which a no less illustrious philosopher than Sir Isaac Newton seems to have attached credit. Burton gravely treats upon the virtue of certain stones worn on the person, to produce moral effects, and after speaking of amulets and plants gathered on Friday, concludes with Renodius, “ I say they are not altogether to be rejected.”† If, however, we find that, following Pliny, it was supposed by Albert the Great, and Guevara, the confessor of Charles V., that certain stones really possessed medicinal properties, we must not conclude that against such an opinion the censures of the church were applicable : “ It is proved,” says the Moral Mirror, “ that bodies have certain occult properties, as the loadstone, and, therefore, it is not superstition to try them in various combinations, provided no characters be added, which cannot give force to nature.”‡

Totally unconnected with scientific speculations, was the error against which such dreadful penalties were appointed by many councils, in reference to those who wore amulets and phylacteries.

In the books of occult philosophy by Cornelius Agrippa, we can see how many forms of writing holy words, in Latin or Hebrew, were used superstitiously as charms. The Rabbinical writers had innumerable secrets of this kind ; and Agrippa, shows how there are to be written on parchment, in gold letters, words out of the Bible.§ A distinction, however, was to be made even here, for as the continuator of Vincent of Beauvais's work

observes, “ If relics or sacred readings are carried round the neck through reverence for God and the saints, they are lawful ; but if any thing vain be added, as for instance, that it must be in a triangular vessel or such like, which in no way pertains to the reverence of God, they become superstitious.”* In like manner, John of Salisbury, while exposing the folly and turpitude of superstition, takes care to show that pious practices of devotion, analogous to the touching of our Lord's garments, such as repeating the Lord's prayer in administering medicine to the sick, or making the sign of the cross over the drink, or reading a chapter of the Gospels, or any thing done from true faith, and referred to the glory of the omnipotent God, may be retained, not only without sin, but, as is proved, he says, by experience, with utility ; while all practices not included under this head, are not so much to be despised as to be fled from.† One need only look into the collection of Ives de Chartres to see what was the zeal of the church, in the middle ages, against superstitions of every kind.‡

Descending to later times, we find the council of Narbonne, in 1555, proclaiming that bishops ought to oppose superstition with as much force as they resist heresy, and that it is one of their principal duties to prevent sortileges, divinations, and enchantments, from being disseminated in their dioceses. The first council of Milan, in 1565, enters with great detail upon the subject, and imposes severe penance upon such as wore or sold charmed rings, or professed to foretell actions, depending on the free will of men, or who, in beginning a journey, or setting about any enterprise, should observe days, or the cry or flight of birds. Finally, we may remark, that against all arts of this kind the Roman pontiffs have enacted laws, as in the decretals of Gregory IX., Leo. X., Sixtus V., Gregory XV., Urban VIII., and Benedict XIV. Modern writers, I am aware, have been pleased to condemn and ridicule these sentences, though the bull of the latter pontiff against sorcery, even stripped of its authoritative character, as emanating from a head so little credulous, ought to be sufficient to make the prudent pause. The fact, however, that men opposed to the Catholic church on professedly religious

* Le Brun. Hist. des Pratiques Superstitieuses, tom. i. 383. † II. 5.

‡ Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Morale, III. Lib. iii. 28. § Lib. iii.

* Vinc. Bellov. Spec. Mor. III. Lib. iii. c. 28.

† De Nugis Curialium, Lib. ii. c. 1. 17.

‡ Ivon. Carnot. Decret. Pars xi.

and philosophical grounds should be found taking part against her in this contest, and evincing a sympathy with her antagonists, even of this order, is assuredly remarkable. Her zeal against paganism they stigmatize as a barbarous fanaticism—her endeavour by spiritual and intellectual means to check superstition under other forms, as being itself unnecessary and eminently superstitious, implying a belief in things which do not exist. Gibbon, and the writers who follow in his steps, seem full of indignation, and full of compassion, whenever reminded of the contest of the Church with paganism. In allusion to this, Heeren laments, if not loudly, yet deeply, what he terms the fanaticism of the Christians, in the time of Constantine, and he seems to have no terms strong enough to express his feeling on the conduct of the bishops and monks of Gall in the fifth century. Poor St. Martin, for what he thought a holy work, incurs from this learned man the charge of having displayed the fanatical rage of a monk, united with the destructive spirit of a soldier. Every idol which falls draws forth fresh exclamations from him against the herd of monks, who spread such ruin over the land.*

An historian of the ages of faith can hardly be expected to enter formally upon the justification of the Catholic society, on the ground of its hostility to the idolatrous superstition of pagan times. Happily, too, the influence of writers, of the class to which I allude, seems in general on the decline. To know somewhat of the history relative to these decrees of the Church, must be at all times useful; it is well to cast a look back at the gloomy depths from which the human race has been drawn, at the dense clouds of horrid darkness, which have passed from this region of the earth. "We are so accustomed," says Frederick Schlegel, "to view the fabulous world and the gods of Greece, only on the poetic side, as a mere beautiful poem, that we are quite surprised and mortified when we stumble unexpectedly upon some fact of history, which reveals the peculiar spirit, and the real foundation of the whole of heathenism; such, for example, as that Themistocles himself, the deliverer of Greece, had offered a human sacrifice of three young men."† The opinion of these writers respecting the

inutility, and even superstition of the ecclesiastical censures against those who practised magical arts, has, at first, greater appearance of plausibility, and will require a more formal refutation. And now I might say with Cardan, "our bark has just escaped the vast sea, tempest tossed, of human wisdom, enters upon the deep gulf of darkness, where are nothing but thefts, fires, witchcraft, murders, false images, execrable sacrifices, delusions, shadows, and vanities; and, as in dreams, with a disturbed mind, we seem to behold black clouds and terrific spectres, suns shining at midnight, and bleeding moons, and horrific monsters, so doth this everlasting cave of all evils, this vortex of wickedness, now offer itself to perplex and to dismay."*

Who so little conversant with the history of ages past as not to have heard of the belief of the human race in the possibility of the rational creature having a supernatural intercourse with the invisible powers of evil, which exist in the universe! When we open the ancient books, we meet with many imitations of this conviction—with many reputed facts related in support of it, and what is also certain, there is corresponding to such notes a secret chord within our breasts, which cannot without considerable difficulty be silenced or unstrung! Alas! how different is the procession that might now be seen, by only stepping aside a little space from that which we have lately witnessed, while contemplating the blessed clean of heart, who beheld God! Nor can we avoid wholly omitting to observe this other procession, by denying, *in limine*, the truth of the human traditions; for it is an historical fact, that while there has been a successive series of pure and just men, beatified even on earth by the vision of their Creator, so has there also been a successive series of persons deep in guilt and shame, cultivating sympathy with night and darkness, devoted to a demoniac mysticism, who sought to behold his enemy, who believed that they had attained in nocturnal visions that horrible point of evil, and who were deemed by their contemporaries to have had their wills in that respect gratified.† What kind of personages then are these? No one can be at a loss to answer this question, who is at the pains to open history, or to consult the popular traditions of any country. It is immaterial what choice we make of instances; let us take the first

* Heeren, *Geschichte der Classischen Litteratur im Mittelalter*, i. t. 49.

† *Philosophie der Geschichte*, i. 223.

* Cardani de *Sapientia*, Lib. iv.

† *Goërres die Christliche Mystik*, i. 20.

which accident recalls. Here then is one of whom our old Norman writers write darkly; it is the mother of Ranulfe Flambart, an unworthy bishop of Durham in the reign of William Rufus, of a plebeian race, who was, they all declare, a sorceress and had converse with the demon, in whose intimacy she had lost an eye, and on her son's fall she passed the seas into Normandy with her treasure, exposed to the derisions of her fellow travellers, on account of her criminal enchantments; so speaks Orderic Vitalis.* She who follows is the sister of Balak, a distinguished warrior against the Christians in Palestine, who was a very skilful sorceress, and who predicted the future, and observed the stars.†

"All day the wizard lady sat aloof, spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity." This applies also to the next in view—Madame Tiphaine Raguenel, daughter of the Viscount de la Belliere, and wife of Bertrand du Guesclin; she retired to the abbey of Mount St. Michael, when her husband went to the war in Spain, and he caused a handsome lodge to be built for her at the top of the rock. One of the motives of this truly extraordinary woman, in choosing this residence, was her love for the sciences, and, especially, for judicial astrology. Dom Huynes says of her, "this lady, well educated in philosophy and judicial astronomy, exercised herself continually on this rock, in contemplation of the stars, and in calculations and making experiments. It seems she even remained on Mount St. Michael till a very advanced age, and that she rarely left it. In 1374 she was still there, at the end of which year she died in one of her castles in Brittany. Some of her manuscripts still exist, and Raoul, in his history of Mount St. Michael, says, "that he remembers when he was a child, hearing mention of a little book on vellum, of one hundred pages, with cabalistic figures, and coloured vignettes, which was carefully preserved by the curate of Pludihen."‡ But there are darker figures of this class, for Spenser does but copy from historic records,

There in a gloomy hollow glen, she found
A little cottage, built of sticks and reedes,
In homely wise, and wal'd with sods around;
In which a witch did dwell in loathly weedes,
And wilfull want, all careless of her needes;
So choosing solitarie to abide
Far from all neighbours, that her divelish deedes
And hellish arts from people she might hide,
And hurt far off unknowne whomever she envide.§

* Lib. x.

+ Id. Lib. xi.

† Hist. de Mt. S. Mic. 226.

§ Book iii. 7.

Characters of this kind are not confined to our annals, as every classic scholar knows. Socrates himself did not disdain to consult one of them: such was that divining stranger who gave to him, he says, "the best account of the origin of love;" so that when called upon at Agatho's banquet, to give his opinion respecting it, he only cited what he had heard once from this witch, or, as he calls her, this divining woman, who was wise, and knew many other things, for she foretold the plague of Athens ten years before it occurred; he contented himself with repeating her conversation with him. "What discourse she held with me," he says to the company, "I will endeavour to relate to you."*

We have seen but women; no less formidable are the representations of the wizard. There were feudal barons, there were men even of sainted habit, who might have heard addressed to themselves such words as those of the abbot of St. Maurice to Manfred,

"I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy."

These were the men, dwelling in embattled towers perched on precipitous crags, or within the cloistered enclosures of the pure and innocent, who might have said with a poet of congenial mind,

"——— And then I dived
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect, and drew
From withered bones, and skulls, and heap'd
up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old time:
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He, who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara.

If we will hear the ancient chronicles, many were the men, who thus with earnest thought heaped knowledge from forbidden mines of lore, who frequented no other schools besides the caves of Toledo and Salamanca, no other books besides the Clavicules and the Grimoires, no other masters but the demons.

In vain, to sooth his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain, the learning of the age
Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;

* Plato, Conviv. 22.

Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride.

Such men, though not openly denounced, were regarded with as much terror as if it had been proved by demonstration ocular, that they were bound in the belt of Peter the First, king of Castille, after it had been charmed by the Jew magician, whom Maria de Pedilla employed.* In effect what passed in their secret studies at the back of the houses, could hardly remain perpetually unknown, and it was certainly enough to awaken fears; for there, in hours of darkness and tempest, these men were employed with strange instruments of undiscoverable art around them. Clothed in long robes on which cabalistic characters were traced, having generally at their side some hideous creature, with hell's stamp upon him, drest in magical garments, to fetch and set down things at their bidding, while the floor was covered over with circles, and the room hung round with consecrated tapers and human skeletons, they were muttering from some great book, pacing with measured steps to and fro, then lifting up a face of ghastly paleness to look out on the night, then kneeling down and touching the ground with their forehead; then in the onrush of the storm was heard suddenly a medley of voices, as in a quarrel; then, again, as in talk, then as whispering and laughing, while lightning and thunder chased each other; and the house seemed to tremble to its lowest foundations.

The narratives respecting magicians that were current in the middle ages, have all a certain similarity to each other. Let us hear some of them: in the *Magnum Chronicon Bellicum* we read as follows:—"In the city of Utrecht, between Brabant and Cologne, arrived a certain teacher from Toledo, who was a great necromancer, and wholly given to the devil. While sitting at table with the clergy, whom he would, he permitted to eat, and whom he would, he sent to sleep; wherefore eight vain clerks sought to be intimate with him. It is said that he drew a circle with strange characters round the edge, placed these eight clerks within it, laid three seats, which he said were for the three Magi, and

on the outside prepared another for Epamam,—that about midnight he flayed a cat, and cut two pigeons in halves, and invoked three demons to supper,—that they told the clerks they should have their evil will fulfilled—that the Magister then held impious conversation against Christ and Christians, till the rising of the sun, when he let the clerks depart, and commanded them in future to deny the incarnation." A story told me by Godescalk of Walmunstein, a monk of happy memory, says Cesarius of Heisterbach, should not be omitted. One day he asked a clerk and magician to relate something wonderful respecting his art. The magician replied, I can tell you a fact, which occurred at Toledo, my native city. Many scholars from different countries were there, for the express purpose of studying magic; among them some youths from Bavaria and Suabia, who persuaded their master at length to give them visible proof of his power. He took them at a convenient hour into the open country, and enclosed them within a circle, admonishing them as they valued their lives not to leave it, to give nothing to the demons, and to receive nothing from them. Soon there appeared all manner of figures, endeavouring to allure them beyond it; one of them accepting a ring, was instantly dragged away, and all vanished. The students threatened their master with death unless he were restored; and he, through fear of death, succeeded by his art in restoring him to his companions; but his face was so emaciated and pale, that he resembled a corpse raised from the tomb. This student soon after retired into a monastery.

Representations of this kind are probably new to no one; but the point for us to determine is, whether these rest upon any substantial ground of truth, or are merely the result of wandering and excited imaginations, though at whatever conclusions we may arrive on this head, the charge against the Church for condemning such superstitions, and against the Catholic society of the ages of faith for regarding them with horror, is equally untenable, since whether we believe or not in the reality of the supernatural intercourse, the crimes which unquestionably resulted from the desire of maintaining it, were not the less numerous and detestable. It may be true that all which John Nider says of magicians, in the fifth and last book of his *Formicarium*, he had learned from a judge of the city of Berne, and from a Benedic-

* *Roderici Sancti Episc. Hist. Hispanice*, P. iv. c. 14.

tine monk, who before his conversion had been a necromancer, a buffoon, a player and jongleur in the court of secular princes, yet Gabriel Naudé cannot on such ground convince us that the guilt of these superstitions has been exaggerated. If men were found by night near gibbets, gathering up the hair, or the nails, or the teeth, or bones of the malefactor, over whose minds and bodies while living the demon had had such power, or groping in graves, or descending into catacombs carrying tapers, altar stones, missals, chalices, and vestments for the holy mass, with some youth at their side, whose wild ravings for the loss of one that had been dearly loved, all his fellow scholars knew; or if in their houses were discovered venomous herbs, unknown ointments, toads, brass and leaden plates with barbarous words or characters engraven on them, one can very easily understand why, at least, the ecclesiastical authority should have taken alarm, since its aim was always to prevent crime, and these were no slight indications that minds were capable of intending to commit it to an extent that knew no limits but the human or Satanic power; for, according to the traditions of those who dealt with hell, it was not candles alone moulded beneath the midnight darkness of the new moon, nor the mere uttering magical words and incantations that could give one the mastery over the soul of another; there was much more belonging to such works, as the initiated well knew. Rites and spells, without blood, were incomplete, and conjurations required the very pain of its outgushing screams, and the agonies of death.

In the year 1829, while the sophists of France were clamorous against the Holy See for exhorting the clergy to take measures to check sorcery, the journals were publishing accounts of wretches killing boys from having been told by witches that nothing could cure their disease but the fat of Christian innocents. Three years have not elapsed since a man murdered a shepherd, near Insterburch, in Prussia, who, on being arrested, confessed that he had done so in order to obtain a fat, with which he was told a torch could be made that would render him invisible. That crimes of this nature were always associated with such arts, is a fact that admits of no dispute. The Arians accused St. Athanasius of having killed Arsenius, to make use of his hand for magical purposes; and when the bishop was found to be alive,

they ascribed his appearance to the diabolic power of the saint, who, at their suggestion, was banished to Treves.

The work of Gabriel Naudé, entitled "Apology for the Great Personages suspected of Magic," undoubtedly reflects credit on the ingenuity of the learned collector who formed the Mazarine library; but that he fails in attaining his object is the conclusion at which I think every one who reads it attentively must arrive. "True," as Roger Bacon observes, "many books were reputed amongst magical, which were not such, but contained the dignity of wisdom."* Believe, then, if you please, might some have justly said, that I can do strange things; I have conversed with a magician, most profound in his art, and yet not damnable; true, again, the popular suspicions were sometimes directed against men as magicians, who had no fault but in whose fortunes there seemed something singular. Trithemius relates a remarkable instance; St. Simeon, from Syracuse, in Sicily, was a recluse at Treves: like holy Abraham, he had left his country for God, and gone first to Jerusalem and thence to Mount Sinai, where he became a monk in the convent of St. Catherine. Some years after he returned to Jerusalem, where he met Boppo, archbishop of Treves, in 1015, who induced him to accompany him to Treves: the archbishop gave him a lodging in a lofty tower, at the black gate, which, says the abbot, is still called Simeon's tower, and there this wanderer endured many trials; for the people not knowing his sanctity, cried out that he was a magician and necromancer; and whenever the crops failed, or storms devastated the land, or any evil befell the city, they ascribed it to him; and often they came with fagots, and tried to set fire to the tower, and at night demons were often heard crying round the tower, that he was an impious malefactor; but the holy servant of God persevered, and there ended his course in great sanctity, and after his death the abbot Eberwen wrote his history, and near the black gate a church of canons was founded, and the people recognised their error. His Greek psalter, in ancient letters, small but legible and beautiful, we saw, says Trithemius, in the monastery of Thelejeusi.† That such cases did occur might be inferred indeed from the ecclesiastical laws collected by the abbot Rhegino, in the ninth cen-

* Lib. de Potestate Artis et Nature, cap. 3.

† Chronic. Hirsang.

tury, which ordered the bishop to inquire on his visitation whether any one charged another with being a sorcerer; for by a capitulary of Charlemagne such a charge insured the death of the traducer.*

No doubt also the object of some authors has been mistaken, as when persons seeing in catalogues that Alexander of Aphrodisæe had written on magical arts, St. Thomas on judicial astrology, and Roger Bacon on necromancy, fancied that they wrote to teach and recommend these things. Further, it is certain that charletans used to pretend that such and such books, compiled by modern hands, had been written by great men. Thus, Chicus says, that he had seen a book of magic, composed by Cham, and another by Solomon; Tritheimius, for example, had to defend himself from the charge of magic, in consequence of a book which was falsely ascribed to him: but when all this is granted, we are yet far from the inference drawn by Naudé, for that Galen, as he says himself, should have been suspected of magic, from having cured a fever by bleeding in two days, that Pope Leo III. to whom was falsely ascribed the book, entitled "*Enchiridion Leonis Papæ contra omnia Mundi Pericula*;" that Pope Silvester, William of Paris, Robert of Lincoln, Alfred the Great, Roger Bacon, and Thomas Bungers, should have been obnoxious to a similar charge ages after their death, and when books were attributed to them which they never wrote, as when the alchemists published works in the name of Albertus Magnus, are facts which can never be admitted as evidence of the least weight to prove the proposition that there has been no such thing in the world as a diabolic tradition and demoniac worship. Notwithstanding the assertions of Naudé, we have only to read the works of Jamblichus on Mysteries, of Porphyry on Sacrifices, of Plotinus on Demonology, and of Proclus on Magic, to be convinced that all the horrors generally implied in the term, "the black art," were taught by those men. Besides, let it be remarked, that the seven wise men of Greece were never suspected of magic—that Plato was never accused of magic—that the disciples of Pythagoras were never accused of magic, though their master was. Why spare Thales the Milesian, so learned an astronomer, or Hecateus and Aristagoras, the first inventors of geometry, astronomy, and arithmetic—none of whom were accused

of magic? On the other hand, all ancient authors agree that Zoroaster practised magic—that Pythagoras was also a magician appears from what his greatest admirers, recount respecting the voice of the rivers which addressed him. The testimony of Jamblichus, Pliny, Origen, Tertullian, St. Justin, St. Cyril, St. Augustin, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Porphyry, must surely outweigh the suggestions of Monsieur Naudé? What has he advanced to make us reject the ancient concurring testimonies respecting the magical practices of Democritus, Empedocles and Apollonius? James of Autun, a Capuchin friar, in a very learned and curious work,* has examined the different assertions of Naudé, and has undermined his conclusion by showing that the illustrious men, whom he cites, as having been suspected of magic, were not suspected by their contemporaries, and that for believing in the truth of the charge against others, we have even their own admissions.

Chicus, Æsculanus, Scaliger, and even Cardan, all professed to have conversations with their demon; the latter is, at least, so far guilty, that he boasted of having an hereditary demon from his father, of whom he says, "such was his skill in necromancy, that he surpassed all men of our age." The book which Alchindus wrote, *De Motu Diurno et de Theoria Magicarum Artium*, proves that he knew the practice of that art; the cures by certain enchanted words made by Anselm of Parma, are too well attested to be denied. The *Heptameron*, of the far-famed Peter of Apono, is the most abominable of all books. This extraordinary man was born at Abano, near Padua, in 1260; he was a physician and astrologer, deeply versed in the learning of Averroes; he wrote *Conciliator Differentiarum Philosophicarum et præcipue Medicorum*—having for his assistant Arnold of Villeneuve, though a man very unlike himself. To learn from this Peter, and to see him, the wild youth flocked to Padua from Spain and England, and the German Empire, and from the far parts of Poland. In the eightieth year of his age he was accused of magical arts, and he died in the year 1305, before his trial was over, but his three books were burned in the public square of Padua: the first is called *Heptameron*, which is now printed at the

* Ap. Hartsheim Concil. Ger. ii.

* *L'Incredulité Savante et la Crédulité Ignorante au Sujet des Magiciens et des Sorciers, avec la Réponse à l'Apologie de M. Naudé*, Lyon, MDCLXXI.

end of the first volume of the works of Agrippa; the second is called, by Trithemius, *Elucidarium Necromanticum*; and the last is called by the same author, *Liber Experimentorum Mirabilium de Annulis, secundum 28 Mansiones Lunæ*: his skill in astronomy appears from the astronomical figures which he caused to be painted in the great hall of the palace of Padua, and from his translations of the works of Rabi Abraham Abenezra. Baptist the Mantuan calls him "a man of great, but of too audacious learning."* It is true the inscription on the base of his statue in the palace of Padua affirms, that he was absolved of the charge of heresy; but his own confessions attest his guilt, for he admits that he owed all his success to his having prayed always when the moon was in conjunction with Jupiter, in the head of the dragon. Henry Cornelius Agrippa was also suspected and accused publicly of magic; he complains that some have declaimed against him in the churches before the promiscuous people, accusing him of impiety, while others have whispered in corners to excite prelates and kings against him, in consequence of his books on occult science.† His many journeys were explained by saying, that he could not remain long in any one place, without his magical practices being discovered, and that therefore he moved from place to place. His keeping always five or six dogs in his house, two of which were always in his study, whose names are specified in many of his epistles, and for which epitaphs were written by some of his friends, gave occasion to the saying, that the devil conversed with him in the form of a black dog. Naudé acknowledges, that if the composing books of magic were sufficient proof against any one, all the eloquence of the bar of Paris could not exculpate Agrippa from being a magician. In his books on *Occult Philosophy* he expressly teaches the invocation of demons, with all the characters and ceremonies of magic. With respect to Raymund Lully, Arnold de Villeneuve, St. Thomas, Albert the Great, and other illustrious men of this class, named by Naudé, it is false that they were accused of magic, for the popular voice, as well as the highest authority of their respective times, always declared them worthy of honour and veneration. Trithemius shows that Albert the Great, so far from writing any books of necromancy and magic, on the contrary refuted all such superstitions

in his *Astronomiæ Speculum*.* The eloquent complaints, therefore, of a recent author, respecting the intellectual state of society in the middle ages, are proved groundless, by the simple fact, that these men were not suspected of magic by their contemporaries, as he supposes.

Let us endeavour to trace briefly, with ancient authors, the history of this dark science, and then to explain in what it was thought to consist. According to the early Christian philosophers, the demons were authors of idolatry and magic; and in the second age of the world, the academies of magicians began. St. Clement believes that magic was the capital crime which provoked the wrath of God, and made him drown the world in the deluge. Cham, it is supposed, revived it, and taught it to his son Mesraim, from whom the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Persians learned it. Traces of its predominance can be witnessed in the march of Xerxes, when the horrid rite was celebrated at the nine ways, for each of which a boy and a maid were buried alive. The race of sorceresses who wandered out of Colchis, and sought by the dark practices of black magic to obtain ends beyond mortality, transmitted the doctrines of demoniac mysticism, while all the arts of natural magic were studied by the priests of idols.†

Some have ascribed a peculiar interest in such arts to particular regions of the earth. St. Epiphanius says, that the Carpocratians were the inventors of philtres to fetter the will of man, and make love and hatred grow up in the heart. But, without attending to such details, it is certain from the Holy Scriptures that the practice of diabolic arts in general began very early. The sorceries of the Egyptian magicians and of the Jews, when St. Paul was at Ephesus, are known to every one. Josephus says, that the latter learned the art of casting out devils from Solomon; and it is supposed that the former borrowed from them their forms of adjuration in magic. The sorceries of Simon Magnus for a long time convinced the people of Samaria, from the least to the greatest, that he was the great power of God. Being discomfited by St. Philip, he removed to Rome, where, by his witchcrafts in the time of Claudius, he gained such reputation that he had a statue set up to him as a god.‡ Tertullian reproached the Romans with having placed

* Lib. i. de Patientia, cap. 3.

† Pref. ii. Lib.

* Chronic. Hirsang. An. MOCCLXXX.

† Goëres die Christliche Mystik, i. 18.

‡ Just. Mart. Apolog. ii.

him among their deities; which testimony is sufficient to disprove the opinion of some modern scholars, who refuse to admit the fact, and substitute the inscription *Semoni Deo Sanco* for *Simoni Deo sancto*. St. Isidore says, that the vanity of magical arts taught by Zoroaster and Democritus, from the traditions of evil angels, flourished throughout all the world for many ages.*

To counteract and imitate the divine ordinance of a traditionary instruction to the human race, the ancient writers suppose that the demon provided a tradition of his own, which appeared in the degradation of the Jewish, the Mahometan, and some modern sects; and that, to entice mortals by promising a restoration of the original privileges of nature, he included in it a doctrine of devils, by which men were to be brought into communion with beings of angelic nature. The constant tradition of this diabolic sect is attested by Tertullian, St. Justin, St. Irenæus, St. Cyprian, St. Clement, St. Chrysostom, and St. Augustin. It can be traced through the middle ages; and its existence at the present day, not only in the east, where it reigns as in the days of Pharaoh,† but also in some of the secret societies spread over Europe, is doubted by no one who has extensive communications; though certain individuals, even belonging to these societies, may not conceive it possible; for all things are not for all; and as, in the rights of Bacchus and Ceres, it was necessary that there should be an ass to assist at them to carry the mysteries,—so here, to answer the purpose of those who are initiated, there must be rich men and noble to play an analogous part.

Pliny says that magic was so much accredited in his time, that almost the whole east was under its domination; he remarks, too, that these Oriental superstitions are found so rooted in Britain, that they might be thought to have been first derived thence. "*Adeo ista toto mundo consensere,*" he concludes, "*quanquam discordi et sibi ignoto.*"‡

Every one knows how the poets and philosophers were familiar with this diabolic tradition; Horace attesting the enchantments of Canidia, Homer those of Circe, and Ovid those of Medea: in which representations Lactantius observes that they have only worked upon a ground of truth.

Numa Pompilius had reduced the diabolic

lore to seven books in Latin and seven in Greek. "Not wishing," says St. Augustin, "that men should learn his nefarious science, and yet fearing to violate what was taught him by demons, he chose to have his books buried with him in his sepulchre, which on being dug up under the consulship of Cornelius and Bevius, and shown to the senate, were immediately burnt by its orders."* That Pythagoras learned divination from the Egyptians, is testified by Porphyry,† who describes his superstition in detail. He used to lie near a river at night, wrapped in the fleece of a black lamb; and he remained for thrice nine days, clothed in black wool, in a cave. Pliny says, that Democritus and Empedocles travelled in Egypt to learn magic. "But why has not Aristotle taken notice of the school of magic in Egypt," asks the bishop Mirandulanus, "if it really were such as Picus of Mirandula, Crinitus, and others affirm?" Naudé concludes that it was only a school of natural magic, or mathematics.‡

But the observation of recent travellers proves the rashness of this learned man in contradicting the concordant voice of antiquity, from a desire to maintain a theory of his own; for Lane, in his account of the modern Egyptians, relates that the more intelligent of the Mooslims distinguish the two kinds of magic—the spiritual, which is believed to effect its wonders by the agency of angels and genii, and by the mysterious virtues of certain names of God; the latter natural and deceptive magic, which affects the vision and imagination by physical operations. "The former," he says, "is universally considered among the Egyptians as true magic, and is divided into two kinds—the divine and the Satanic."

Nor were the ancient governments unaware of this evil. Augustus Cæsar condemned to the flames two thousand volumes of divination. Such were the books that the converts brought to St. Paul, as St. Chrysostom and Venerable Bede remark. The books of magic burnt by the apostle were estimated at a sum equivalent to five thousand gold crowns. The court of Nero was filled with magicians, and he himself one of them. But the respite was of short duration: the laws of Constantine were severe against magical arts. The emperors Honorius and Theodosius passed a decree of banishment against all who did

* Etymolog. viii. 9.

† Lane's Modern Egyptians, i. 341.

‡ Nat. Hist. c. i.

* De Civ. Dei, vii. 34.

† De Vita Pythag.

‡ G. Naudé, Apologie pour les Grands Person. soupçonnés de Magic, 2.

not bring their magical books and burn them in presence of the bishops. Eusebius says, however, that though such books are used, the sorcerers receive personal instruction from the demon. No one is ignorant with what evil arts bad spirits were invoked by the gnostic magicians who practised what was done in the infamous rites of the idol Panor with the pagans.*

St. Chrysostom relates that one day, walking with a friend near a river, and observing something white floating, they thought it linen, but as it approached they perceived that it was a book. They contrived to pick it out, and on opening it found that it was a book of magic. A soldier perceived them, and passed on to denounce them. "By the mercy of God," he says, "we threw it into a secret place, and so escaped the danger; for if it had been found in our possession, we should have been condemned as magicians."† Soldiers used to be then placed at the gate of the city to examine whether any one carried such books; and on mere suspicion of magic, persons were left in prison: so severe were the emperors against this crime. The Jew Zedechia, who in the time of Charlemagne had himself called *Magister videns*, and many others against whom his code fulminates this sentence, "*Magi in quacunque sint parte terrarum, humani generis inimici credendi sunt*," are instances to show the succession of the same guilty race to the eighth and ninth centuries. A capitulary of Charlemagne is directed against the nocturnal promenades to desert valleys, after the use of magic unctions, called sabbats of sorcerers, or fairy dances. Leo II., bishop of Catana in the eighth century, having been a Benedictine monk at Ravenna, was said to have resisted a magician named Theodore, whom the hymnographer styles "*aspectu formidabilem natione Judæum, et post Simonem Magum nulli in arte magica secundum*."‡

The diabolic series proceeds unbroken, and comes forward prominently associated with Manichæism in France in the eleventh century, when its presence at Orleans was discovered by Arefast, a Norman seigneur, whose clerk Herbert became infected with it while pursuing his studies in that city. On his return to Normandy, this clerk attempted to gain over his master; but the nobleman was filled with horror at the

discovery, and gave information to Duke Richard II., by whom it was revealed to King Robert, who sent Arefast to Orleans with a secret charge to discover and punish its followers. This nobleman, passing through Chartres, consulted Evrard, keeper of the archives, the bishop Fulbert being absent, as to the manner he ought to adopt for this purpose, who advised him to go every morning to church, and to receive the communion daily, and then, armed with the sign of the cross, to offer himself boldly as a disciple to the two clerks whom Herbert had specified as his teachers, and to hear what their lessons really were. Arefast obeyed these directions, and, after some probationary delays, was admitted into the secret assemblies of the sect, and told that the Christian religion was a fable, and permitted to witness nocturnal rites of horror associated with the invocation of demons for protection. The king, being apprised, repaired to Orleans; and after vain attempts to make them renounce their errors, several underwent capital punishment. The infection, however, which was widely spread, broke out in many places at the time when the Albigenses disturbed France. The description of their different sects by Peter, monk of Vaulx-Cornay, who was present among them, leaves no doubt of their descent from Manes,* whose doctrine was then propagated in a lower and more popular form by the sorcerers and magicians, the appearance of whom in greatest numbers was coeval with that fearful irruption of Huns, those half-sorcerers, hideous and ferocious warriors, represented by Jornandus as sprung from evil spirits in the desolate plains of the north. Olaus Magnus says that magical arts with the northern people were chiefly cultivated by women. Far-famed for such arts were Hagberta, daughter of the giant Vagnost, Craca, a Norwegian woman consulted about the future fortune of Rollo, and many others, of whom, as he informs us, a cauldron was the common instrument, in which they cooked juices, herbs, worms, and entrails.†

The practice of these arts continued throughout the world, and came to light, from time to time, in a manner to alarm the civil government. The fact of execrable rites being ascribed to the Templars, as only showing that mankind was aware of what still existed, is remarkable.

* Agrip. de Occult. Phil. i. 39.

† Homil. 39. in Act. Apost.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, tom. i. 518.

* Duchesne, Rér. Francorum Script. tom. v. 55.

† Olai Mag. Septent. Hist. Lib. iii. c. 13.

John Trithemius relates how the Fratricelli were first discovered and condemned under Boniface VIII. They pretended always to be holy persons; they did not reveal their worst practices to all at first, but only in proportion to the capacity of their novices; they abolished all Sacraments but baptism, said they were full of the Holy Ghost, and could not sin, that no Roman pontiff had any authority after they had been condemned by Boniface, that, excepting themselves, all men would perish for not believing and living as the apostles. Their rule was *omnia munda mundis*; therefore, adultery or incest were no sins with them. They used to hold their meetings amidst mountains and woods, and in caves—men and women attending, and after invoking the Holy Ghost, would extinguish all lights, and practise every kind of horror. The last-born infant of the company was then passed from hand to hand till it expired, when all the company fell on their faces to adore the person in whose hands it died. The second-born was baked over a brazier and pulverized, and the dust was mixed with wine with horrid imprecations, and then given to their novices to drink as a Sacrament; after which they were deemed impeccable within their sect. Boniface VIII. made inquiries all over Italy, where it chiefly prevailed; and by his orders Herman, author of the sect, who had been twenty years in his grave at Ferrara, was dug up and burnt. In Milan there was a rich woman of this sect, named Wilhelma, having a husband Andrea: she affected sanctity, retired to Clairvaux, and died there, and was buried as a holy person. This impious woman, with her husband, had a cave at the end of their house, in which the sacrilegious rites of the sect were celebrated, to which many men and women came by night. The women were tonsured like clerks, with imprecations against the clerical tonsure. Wilhelma acted as priestess for a long time, and used to pronounce the prayers. After her death, which was supposed holy, as I said, her husband Andrea persevered six years in the same course, and seduced many, till a merchant of Milan, by name Conrad, discovered all. This merchant's wife was of the sect, whom he discovered rising at midnight and going out of his court secretly. He followed her, traced her to the cave, and succeeded in passing in with others unchallenged, and thus made the discovery. Contriving, as soon as the lights were put out, to take from his wife's

finger her sapphire ring, he escaped secretly, and returned home. The next day he said nothing, but some time after asked for the ring, when she replied that it was lost. Still dissembling, he gave a grand feast, and invited all whose wives had been seen in the cave, with their wives. After dinner, "Friends and guests," said he, "let each of you do to his wife what you shall see me do to mine." At which words he pulled off her head dress, and lo! the tonsured crown appeared. The astonishment of the other men, when they found their wives similarly tonsured, may be conceived. Conrad then related to them what he had seen. The whole was referred to the tribunals. Andrea was burnt with the bones of his wife, and the women were dismissed by their husbands.

This heresy passed into Germany, where as many as four thousand are said to have caught it. These used to go forth at night, like wild animals, to mountains and woods, to hold their sabbath.*

It was in 1440 that the extent to which magical horrors were practised in France came to light, in the prosecution of the Marechal de Rais, of the illustrious family of Laval, who, on being convicted of all kinds of infamy, was brought to trial by the Duke of Brittany, and burnt at Nantes, having confessed the many murders and execrable impieties of which he had been guilty. The pope's bull, shortly after addressed to the authorities of Languedoc, represented in detail all the operations of magical art, invocation of demons, profanations of holy things, pacts with hell, and the employment of the most criminal human means to injure their enemies; on which latter account, as Berthier remarks, the tribunals of justice were bound to take cognizance of such matters, let their opinion respecting the superstition have been what it might.†

In the reign of Charles IX., Troies-Echelles, who was a famous sorcerer, said that thirty thousand persons in Paris were occupied in sorcery. Catherine de Medicis was said to have worn a talisman composed of a child's skin.

It was, however, during the religious revolution, in the sixteenth century, that the practice of magic prevailed to the greatest extent in every part of Europe, as is admitted by the author of *Letters on Demonology*. Hall's testimony is curious:

* *Chron. Hirsangiens. an. mcccxcviii.*

† *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. xvi. 358.*

—"Satan's prevalency," saith he, "in this age is most clear, in the marvellous number of witches abounding in all places. Now hundreds are discovered in one shire; and, if fame deceive us not, in a village of fourteen houses in the north are found so many of this damned brood. Heretofore only barbarous deserts had them, but now the civilest and religious parts are frequently pestered with them." Contemporary writers remark that every sort of horror marked the epoch of the reformers—earthquakes such as were hardly recorded in history, pestilence, famine, sterility of all things, inundations, tempests—troops of wolves, emboldened by eating those slain in the religious war, and having contracted a relish for human blood, prowling over the country, leaving embowelled or half-eaten the bodies of women and children, so that as Paradin says, God seemed to arm every creature to fight against man in vengeance of his sins—signs in the air, and on the earth, and in the waters, filling all hearts with terror—dire meteors and fearful fires seen in the sky—births abominable in human eyes, seeming to denote the fire of heresy and the monsters of diabolic origin which were desolating the church and drawing down upon sinners the deluge of the wrath of God.*

Above all, the predominance of superstition in countries that had abjured the Catholic faith was truly fearful. The terror which it inspired may be estimated from the brief records of the court books relative to executed witches, comprised in the words "*Convicta et combusta*." Nevertheless the evil existed elsewhere, and it caused far less alarm with consequences much more dreadful; for the ancient diabolic traditions seemed to have more vigour wherever the antagonist faith was rescuing men from their influence.

In 1751 a law was passed in France which condemned shepherds to nine years of the galleys for a simple threat of throwing a sortilege. This was in consequence of the terror inspired by the shepherds of Brie, the account of which forms by far the most interesting portion of Le Brun's History.† To such rustic traditions Shakespeare makes allusion:—"This boy is forest-born, and hath been tutored in the rudiments of many desperate studies." The horrible sacrilegious rites which came to light in the dungeons of the Bastille, at

the epoch of the poisoning society, are further evidence of the same continued tradition.* The confessions of the old priest, Stephen Guabourg, chaplain of the Count of Montgomery, and of Gilles Davot, revealed the nature of the sacrilegious masses of indescribable horror, which were celebrated in a house of the street of St. Denis, for each of which two hundred francs used to be paid; in which the demon was invoked to aid the designs of the poisoners and other wretches. Of these, Mirabeau said, "you cannot believe what nevertheless will be proved to you."

The existence of secret societies in England, bearing horrible names, at whose assemblies the most sacred rites were blasphemously mimicked, gave also further evidence of the same kind. Without remaining, however, any longer to multiply testimonies which all lead to the same conclusion respecting the singular perpetuity and uniformity of diabolic superstition, let us proceed to examine more minutely into the real character of these arts, the history of which we have briefly and imperfectly traced.

Many learned and ingenious writers in modern times have undertaken to explain this dark page of history without any assistance from a belief in supernatural causes; but to the schoolmen their notions would have appeared unphilosophical, and the mere substitution of unknown words for unknown things. A late author has had the malice to accuse the clergy of having favoured the progress of such a belief, as contributing to extend their own authority: but, not to remark the many absurdities into which such a theory betrays him, the assertions of writers, who always suppose that self-interest, grossly understood, is the motive of every one, merit in truth no attention. The holy Scriptures attest the corporeal appearance and visible operations of evil spirits, as well as the practice of magic and divination. The divine law expressly denounces its penalties against all that use divination, or witches, or charmers, or consultants with familiar spirits, or wizards, or necromancers: and the philosophers of the middle ages could never suppose that these laws were ordained to repress imaginary crimes, nor could they have foreseen that they would incur a charge of craft or ignorance for holding a contrary opinion. The actual exercise of these diabolic arts is ascribed to Menasseh,

* Hist. de Lyons, Lib. iii. c. 42. † Tom. i.

* Mem. Hist. sur la Bastille. Londres, 1789.

and to many of the Jews in the time of our Saviour. Among the Gentiles, the most attentive observers of nature did not reject the possibility of reading the future. Hippocrates believed in divination by dreams, of which Aristotle doubted, saying, "it is not easy either to despise or credit them;"* but, as Melchior Canus observes, "by so doing, the Stagyrite erred against the truth of the Scriptures."

However unwilling we may be to incur a charge of credulity, we must, I think, conclude that it is not by the inventions of a philosophy which contradicts revelation, that any rational explanation can be given of the phenomena which the schoolmen ascribed to the action of those damnable powers spoken of by the great Apostle of the nations, when he tells us that we have to contend against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in high places. That these invisible agents had a school on earth, no one doubted in former ages. "There is a wisdom of the past," says Cardan, "a wisdom of the present, a wisdom of the future—there is a divine, a human, and a demoniacal wisdom."†

All the eminent English metaphysicians of the seventeenth century believed with Cudworth in the existence of magical arts, and many, like Fairfax, wrote expressly to expose their danger. They felt that they could not understand the whole of their own nature, much less that they could comprehend the rest of the world and all its unexplored mysteries.

What was the opinion of the ancient Christian philosophers on this head? St. Clement of Alexandria says, "that the school of magic is an academy of hell, where magicians have demons for masters, who teach men that there are certain arts which can compel them to obey mortals." Tertullian says, "that magic and sorcery are the cause of all errors—that they ruin the soul, and constitute a second idolatry."‡ The attractions used by the demon to engage men in magic were supposed to be sensual pleasure, the hope of escaping from misery, and the desire of riches; as when he said to Christ, "all these things will I give you, if you will adore me." The fascination which they exercised over the human mind seemed almost irresistible: "he who had once swallowed a par-

ticle of witchcraft," says an adept in the openness of his heart, "can never keep his fingers from it afterwards as long as he lives. The thing is like the love of drink, once get the taste for it, and tongue, and throat, and lungs, and liver, will never let it go." This explains the saying of Tacitus, that "it is a class of men which will always be prohibited, and will always exist." The schoolmen seem to have entertained no doubts as to the reality of traditional arts of this kind. "Magic is not received in philosophy," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but it is extrinsic—a mistress of malice and all iniquity, alien from truth, and truly wounding the mind, seducing it from divine religion to the worship of demons, causing corruption of manners, and impelling the mind to all wickedness."* They evinced, however, no want of judgment or caution in distinguishing the effect of natural science from the result of such arts. The rule was thus laid down by Suarez, "When one expects an effect from a cause which has not naturally the power to produce it, then the secret is certainly diabolic; for since the effect is above the power of natural causes, and since these practices have no tendency to promote piety, the author cannot be any other than the demon."† St. Agobard, in the ninth century, attributes the illusions of the demon to a want of faith in those who invoked him; for "the demon," he says, quoting St. Leo, "knows whom he can cast down by sadness, seduce by fear or joy, and deceive by admiration. Though he transform himself into an angel of light one must neither fear nor admire his power."‡ According to Pliny, who says that magical art has been in repute in all times, there are three principles of magic—medicine, astrology, and religion—the first as a remedy, the second a mean, the third a cloak to deceive. Tertullian says, "that the devil apes all the mysteries of God, that he is full of emulation to rival even things in the mysteries of the divine Sacraments, so that he baptises, he gives his believers secret marks, such as under the eyelid or elsewhere the paw of a cat, or of a hare, a toad, or spider, and that he celebrates also the oblation of bread."§

It was in allusion to these things that the Jews were forbidden by the divine law to make marks or stigmas upon their

* De Anima. † De Sapientia, Lib. i.
‡ De Anima, cap. 57.

• Erudit. Didasc. Lib. vi. 15.
+ Lib. ii. De Superstit. cap. 15. n. 9.
‡ Oper. Agob. t. i. 202.
§ De Præscript. 140.

bodies. King Joachim, after his death, was found to have on his body characters as the seal of Satan, to whom he had devoted himself: for as the Jews, by circumcision, were devoted to God, so the sorcerers pledged themselves to his enemy by an outward rite. Epimenides, who used charms to deliver the Athenians from the plague, was found to have similar marks upon his body.

In the earliest writers we find mention of men making pacts with Satan. The fame of these, in the middle ages, was widely spread: the devil was supposed then to assign a demon to his worshipper in imitation of the guardian angel of the Christians. The sculptured figures upon Gothic temples, representing Satan pressing within his grasp the hand of a man who bends his knee before him, are an allusion to these execrable compacts, of which the church has heard instances in every age. The arch of the north door of the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, at Paris, contains, in many compartments, representations of a diabolic pact and of a deliverance effected by the blessed Virgin, which is related in a metrical legend composed by Rutebœuf in the time of St. Louis. In this entablature, a magician, Salatin, wears a pyramidal bonnet, borrowed, as well as his name, from the Eastern countries, whence occult and cabalistic arts had chiefly been derived. The idea, as we have observed, was no invention of the middle ages. St. Cyprian, who, before his conversion, professed magic, had given himself to the demon in writing: St. Thomas applies to such persons the words of Isaia, "*pepigimus fœdus cum morte, et cum inferno fecimus pactum.*" St. Augustin says, "that the art of magic arose from the superstitions of a society, bound together, of demons and men, established as if by a certain compact of infidel and treacherous friendship."* One object of this confederacy was to endeavour to efface baptism by some ceremonies, as when Julian washed himself in the blood of the victims offered to demons. Innocent III., in his bull, laments the fact that multitudes of men and women had given themselves to the demon at Mains, Cologne, Treves, Salzbouurg, and Bremen, and that they, in consequence, had killed children, denied the faith, and committed every execrable superstition and crime. In Guyenne alone there were said to be, at one time, three

thousand persons having the sign of the demon.* *Trois-Echelles*, in the time of Charles IX., affirmed that all his accomplices bore the marks of a hare's foot. The free consent of those who sought to profit by these hellish arts was deemed essential, and it is a curious fact that even the race of wretched impostors, who pretend to practise them, have taught each other invariably to ask the credulous fools who trust them, whether they come from choice and give from their heart what is demanded.

Some of the wild tales that circulated among the people, respecting the end of persons leagued with Satan, are related by Vincent of Beauvais: they are as terrible as any heart can desire—the following is a specimen: "A certain woman at Berhelie, in England, was a witch. One day, as she sat at dinner, suddenly the knife fell from her hand; she turned pale, and groaning, said aloud, 'this day it is all over with me,' and presently a messenger came and told her that her son was dead. She then repaired to certain monks, and sobbing said, 'by a miserable fate I have always served the demon and despaired of myself. Now then I implore you try to alleviate my torments, for you cannot recall my soul from the doom of damnation: sew up my body in a stag's hide and shut it up in a stone coffin, and bind it with lead and iron, and gird the stone itself round with three great chains. If during three nights I lie secure, then on the fourth bury me in the earth: let mass and psalms be sung for fifty nights.' Lo! it was done as she required, but all in vain; for during the first two nights, as the choir sung round the body, demons came and beat at the door of the church, and burst two of the chains, but the middle one resisted: the third night, about cock crow, there was a sound as if the whole monastery were about to be moved from its foundations; one demon, more terrible than the others, burst the bars of the door, and strode up to the coffin, and called her by her name, bidding her rise; to whom she answered, 'the chain hinders me,' 'O! then you shall soon be freed from it,' replied the figure, and immediately bursting the chain like a straw, it seized her hand and dragged her to the church door, where was a black horse proudly neighing, with hoofs all of iron, upon which that wretched woman was placed, and then she

* Lib. 2. De Doct. Christ.

* Ancoran, Lib. 3. de Inconst. Dæmon.

and all the troop disappeared; only her groans were heard for four miles resounding over the woods."* In such tales, amusement, of course was the end.

On the cathedral of Strasbourg, carved in a cornice, is represented the sabbat of sorcerers; the demons and infernal spirits form the concert, and others in fearful guise are dragging the sorcerers to hell. This alludes to the midnight assemblies of persons for purposes of superstition, which were any thing but the invention of credulous heads. Many sorcerers in different ages have agreed in confessing that, at the nocturnal sabbat, they used to adore the demon under the form of a goat. This, it will be said, was the caprice of their imagination: yet these men had never read Herodotus, who tells us that the God Pan, more ancient than the Gods of Greece, was represented under that form. St. Gregory mentions that the Lombards consulted a goat's head to discover futurity.† Tertulian attests that the same animal entered into the rites of magicians.‡ It is a fact that, on these occasions, cruel bloody sacrifices were offered, as in the old days of idolatry amongst all nations. The Druids, the Tartars, were all addicted to the same horrors, associated with magic. In the canton of Berne, thirteen children were killed and devoured at these assemblies: this cruelty was of itself enough to denote the diabolic tradition descending from heathen times, when the priests of idols, like these sorcerers, required the slaughter of innocents for the due celebration of their rite.§ It is certain, likewise, that at these assemblies there was always an execrable mockery of marriage. Every thing of divine institution was impiously mimicked: above all, profanation of the Eucharist became an essential element in arts of this kind; as was witnessed among the Coterelli in France, mentioned by St. Antoninus,|| who turned into ridicule priests and all sacred things; and who were finally destroyed by Philippe Augustus. During the massacres of the Jesuits and friars at Madrid, in 1834, the murderers invariably disfigured the tonsure after fracturing the skulls of the victims, probably from having been initiated in the same traditional school.

Impurity and disobedience were also es-

sential attendants upon the worship of demons; and we may remark, that it was the clear and universal recognition of this fact which rendered inexcusable the infamous politicians who condemned the maid of Orleans as a sorceress; for her devotion, submission, and angelic purity being unimpeached, the mission which she executed could not be ascribed to hellish powers, without contradicting all that had been laid down by the church to guide men in the discernment of spirits.—Hence the Dominican vicar of the Inquisitor refused to take part in the prosecution,—hence the most learned magistrates believed her to be inspired by heaven, to which opinion Gerson and St. Antoninus subscribes,—hence the judges delegated by the Holy See twenty-five years afterwards, cancelled and annulled the sentence against her,—and hence the most cautious and sound historians, in spite of the suggestions of Rapin, have always rendered justice to her memory.*

But to return to the sabbat; according to the popular notion the day of holding it was not the same every where: in Lorraine it was thought to be the night before Thursday or Sunday—in Italy on the Monday; which notions were derived from the depositions of sorcerers. In the penitential canons of Rhaban Maur there are inquiries whether any woman boasted of intercourse with demons, and of attending their nocturnal assemblies on the backs of beats, or even of broomsticks;† and in a capitulary of Charles the Bald, the bishops and priests are exhorted to assure the people in their sermons, that all which such women say of their nocturnal voyages and assemblies is only fable, and passes only in their imagination during sleep.‡ Such was the opinion supported by authority in the ninth century.§ With respect, however, to the credibility of demoniac arts in general, it must be admitted, that the minds of men in the middle ages were at rest; for that all was imagination was what no one then ever pretended. "I know well," says James of Autun, "that to hear the voice of spirits, is not a thing unprecedented." He supposes that troops of demons produced the sounds and noises of confused voices heard on the plain of Marathon after the battle of the Persians, and before that of the Cimbri, as also the

* Vin. Bellov. in Specul. Hist. Lib. xxv. cap. 26. + Lib. vii. Epist. 7 & 8, Dial. c. 26.

† Apolog. c. 23.

‡ Savonarol. Triump. Crucis, Lib. iv. 4.

§ Tom. ii. tit. xvii. § 17.

* Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gall. tom. xvi.

+ Concil. Gen. ii. † Baluz, cap. i. q. 365.

‡ P. Longueval, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. tom. vi.

similar tumult in the air, which so terrified the whole army before the war of Sylla, and at the first battle of Pharsalia. Nothing could overcome the general sense in former times, that there is a number of incomprehensible and marvellous things in the world.

The declarations of holy penitents respecting the demoniac operations with which they had been familiar, would have been thought to present an insurmountable difficulty in the way of those who deny the reality of the traditions which perpetuate them. Giles, son of Vailladaros, commandant in Coimbra, was made a canon and prior when a child; but though his profession was spiritual, he lived in profligacy, and being tempted to study medicine, he proceeded to apply himself to magic, denied the faith, and during seven years received instruction in forbidden science in a cave near Toledo: he then went to Paris, where he obtained great celebrity. It happened that as he was once secretly employed in his house, there appeared to him a knight with a lance in his hand, and a terrific countenance, who rushed upon him as if about to kill him, crying out, Amend thy life, godless wretch! Giles was filled with terror, but after some days, he recovered his composure, and lived as before: a short time elapsed, and again the same knight appeared to him, more terrible even than before, crying, Amend thy life or thou shalt die! Giles fell to the ground and uttered but these words, "Yea, Lord, I will amend, I will amend." The knight touched his side next the heart with his lance, and vanished. Giles, thinking himself mortally wounded, called to his servants; his flesh was found to be whole, but it was true that his heart had been touched, for it was wholly changed. He ordered a fire to be lighted in his hall, threw all his magic books into it and departed for his father's land. On arriving at Valencia, he applied for admission among the Dominicans, who received him into a new convent there, but during seven years he had to sustain the most horrific visions of the spirits of darkness, who sought to draw him back again, so that he used to declare he would a thousand times prefer having his head cut off to beholding them but for once: he finally became a man of eminent sanctity, and in 1283 was made provincial of his order.*

St. Augustin, speaking of the power of good and evil angels, says, "that neither

the good have any power, unless, as far as God commands; nor can the evil act unjustly, unless as far as he justly permits. For the malice of the wicked hath an unjust will, but it hath its power only justly, whether for its own penalty or for the punishment of others that are wicked, or for the praise of the good."* The magicians themselves say, "Magna est potentia Sathanæ propter hominum magna peccata."† The learned Leo Allatius relates a curious circumstance, which fell under his own observation. It is now thirty years ago since I embarked at Scyo to go to Messina; on that voyage after some time a tempest rose, which threatened us with destruction. Observing the pilot contemplating the waves, making signs and muttering words, I went up to him in a rage and said. What are you doing there? Is this a time to abandon the helm? The old man replied, See you not that I am breaking the force of the waves with this sign of the cross, and certain words? Observe now and see that it is every ninth wave which puts us in danger. Strange fact, it was even so. My curiosity overcame my fear, and for more than one hundred times it was always the ninth wave which seemed most terrible. This word and signing proves the superstition of the pilot, and probably that he had made a pact with the demon, who redoubled the excitation of the ninth, to nourish the credulity of the pilot.‡

Whatever may be thought of this narrative, it is curious to find the same superstition mentioned by Ovid, who speaks in his *Tristia* of the tenth wave. That impure men who sought not to see God, endeavoured to profit by an intercourse with demons, is a fact which does not admit of question, and the appearance of malicious artifice in the mode by which such persons were generally deceived, is not a little strange. History is full of instances. Forte Braccio, a great captain of Sienna, was betrayed by his familiar demon, whom he had asked whether he should go to battle, and had his answer in writing, *Ibis, redibis, non morieris*; but a comma transposed made it, *Ibis, redibis non, morieris*. A relative of the famous magician condemned by the parliament of Provence, had attempted to seize the duchy of Castro from the church. He asked his demon, if by taking arms he

* De Trin. Lib. iii. c. 8.

† Arbatal de Magia.

‡ Tractat. de quorundam Opinat. Græc. c.

* Goërres die Christliche Mytik, i. 320.

could seize the town of Castro, defeat the papal troops, and even push his conquests to Bologna? His answer was, *Ingredieris castrum, conculcabis Ecclesiam, Bononia tibi serviet*. Confiding in this promise, he marched, was defeated, and taken prisoner.

He then began to suspect the treachery of his demon, *Ingredieris castrum*—Lo, he is in a castle. He asked the servant what prison was under him. The servant replied, it was the chapel—*Conculcabis Ecclesiam*. Finally, he asked the servant his name, I am called Bologna. "Ah, wretched man," he exclaimed, "the prediction of my master is accomplished." To such the prophet of old alludes: "I am the Lord who render useless all the predictions of the diviners: I reverse their understanding, and I change their wisdom into folly."* On the other hand there are many strange relations difficult to be set aside, respecting predictions of diviners, confirmed by the event.

Michael Scot is cited as a great theologian by the most learned of the Carmelites, and the prince of the Averroistes, John Bacco.† He was nevertheless a great astrologer, and, as such, is mentioned by Agrippa: he enumerates twelve kinds of auguries, from Fernova to Harrenan, corresponding to the twelve signs of the zodiac.‡ Certain it is that he foretold to his master the Emperor Frederick Second, that he would die in a castle of Apulia, named Fiorenzola, and also in a church—all which came true, for being bareheaded in the act of appearing to adore Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, the cord of the bell that they were sounding caused a stone to fall on his head, which caused his death on the spot. The astrologers consulted by Louis XI. are more noticed by historians, on account of the rich reward bestowed upon them, than for the certainty of their predictions,§ though it is said that Angelo Catto announced to him on giving the peace at mass, in the church of St. Martin at Tours, that at that moment the duke of Burgundy was slain at Nanci. Celebrated in later times was that prediction of the old astrologer, who was brought into the supper room of the Duke of Nemours, where he was entertaining Albert Mirandula and the French knights, who accompanied him on his expedition, who then foretold the

event of the approaching battle, and added in full detail the end of the duke, whose hand, however, he never examined, as also that of Bayard, of the Seigneurs de la Palisse and d'Imbercour, and of the adventurer Jacquain Caumont. It is remarkable that some of the strangest superstitions should be traced from the most remote antiquity, and found among all nations. Such is that opinion of there being to names assigned a charm profound expressive of future destiny—mysterious potency of sound, which even the wise Æschylus seems to credit in his Agamemnon, when it is observed that Helen's fatal name and destruction are the same; and to which Shakspeare has made us all familiar, by that scene of death in which the fourth Henry demands, Doth any name particular belong unto the lodging where I first did swoon? and who, on being told that it is called Jerusalem, exclaims, "Laud be to God! even there my life must end; it hath been prophesied to me many years I should not die but in Jerusalem, which vainly I supposed the holy land; but bear me to that chamber, there I'll lie, in that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

Such, again, is the notion of the guilty sleep of sorcerers, as due to their previous crimes in waking hours. Let us hear a wild narrative in illustration: "A hunter, near Poligny, in Burgundy, wounded a wolf that was running by him, which continued on his way though the ball had evidently gone through him. Greatly amazed the hunter followed him by the track of blood till he came to a little cabin, where, on entering in, he found a man wounded near a woman, who was putting a plaister on the hole. The hunter denounced this man as a sorcerer, and certain it is that the wretch confessed to the judge his custom of changing himself into a wolf, by means of an ointment made by the demon. This history was written on parchment, and hung up near the door of the Dominicans at Poligny." The notion on which this narrative is founded was most ancient, and so widely spread, that the most illustrious men have condescended to mention it. "That the human body," says St. Augustine, "can in any manner by the arts of the demon, be converted into bestial members, I could never believe."⁶ "On the other hand," he observes, "that miracles by magical arts, can be performed similar to those effected by the servants of God;"

* Isa. xlv. † Part 8. Sentent. dist. 33.

‡ Mic. Scoti Liber Phisionom. lvii.

§ Berthier, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. xvii. 129.

• De Civ. Dei, xviii.

and St. Thomas says, "in the proper sense of the word, miracles cannot be performed by demons, or any other creatures, for a miracle strictly speaking, is that which is contrary to the order of all created nature, but if it be widely understood, as an effect exceeding human faculties, the demons can work miracles, as was seen with the magicians of Pharaoh; and though material bodies are not subject to their power, they can be transmuted by them as to form, by virtue of certain seeds, or natural qualities, which are in the elements of the world; these mutations, indeed, are not real, as if human bodies could be changed to bestial bodies, or raised from dead to life; but if such operations should sometimes appear to be effected by demons, it is not done in reality, but merely in appearance, which can be effected by the demon working on the imagination of men, or even exteriorly on the senses, so as to make things seem otherwise than according to truth."*

The perpetuity of the same kind of pretensions is at all events a curious fact in this history. Cardan, as well as Sir Kenelm Digby, speaks of a manner of anointing a sword, so as to wound and cure at a distance. The influence of demons upon the air, was a most ancient opinion. The magic art of Eric of the windy hair was celebrated in the north. "This Eric, king of Sweden, was second to none in such arts," says Olaus Magnus, "and being familiar with demons, in whichever direction he turned his hair immediately the wind blew; whence his surname Ventosus Pileus."† Cornelius Agrippa says, "that by burning aameleon on the roof of a house, with cabalistic rites, he can raise a storm. The great tempest which passed through all Bohemia and Germany, at the time when John Huss began to preach heresy, was thought to have been caused by sorcerers; and from a similar notion the whirlwind over Newark, during the night of St. Luke's day, when king John expired there, filled the inhabitants of the place with terror."‡

Particular places possessed an odious fame for the acquisition or practice of these arts. Such were the sorcerers' caverns near Toledo, Seville, and Salamanca, the entrances to which were walled up by order of Isabella, the wife of Ferdinand. Of the former many extraordinary things were recounted. The great historian of that

city relates that Roderic, the last king of the Goths, caused to be opened, contrary to the will of all men, an ancient palace at Toledo, which had been always shut up and secured with locks and bars by former kings. He had expected to find treasure within it, but he found only one chest, which contained a cloth, exhibiting Latin letters, and pictures of men, with the countenance and arms of Arabs, sitting upon horses, having their heads bound with vines, and wearing vests of many colours, and holding swords and javelins and banners; and the letters stated, that when the locks were broken, and the chest and palace opened, the nation represented by these figures would come and invade Spain. The king and grandees were alarmed, and made the chest and palace fast as before.* Cornelius Agrippa speaks of Saturnian places, such as dark, subterraneous, deserted, and solitary caverns, marshes, cemeteries, graves, and waste tracts,† to which corresponded birds of Saturn, such as have long necks and hoarse voices, cranes, owls, bats, and ravens, emitting sounds, that in rough winter oft inflict a fear on fireside listeners, doubting what they hear. In particular he mentions a Norwegian mountain, Hecheberg, whence lamentations and groans, and horrible shouts and shrieks are heard, while huge vultures and ravens hover over it; and he speaks of similar mountains in Thuringia and Scotland, where wicked intercourse was thought to reign.‡ Ilsebourg, a wild looking village, situated at the entrance of a narrow gorge, through which dashes a mountain torrent, is described by a recent traveller, "as one of these Saturnian places. I never saw an inhabited spot more fitted to be the scene of some dark deed done in the eclipse than this. A barren waste leads to it—a hundred hills covered with tangled forests, fence it round—and high above their heads, rises the Great Brocken, amidst whose deep covers superstition has been cradled for ages."

Another branch of superstition often combined with the profession of magic art, was alchemy, the mere terms of which bespeak an alliance with the spirit of idolatry, for all the old accursed fancies were employed in it. "I know that gold is made by alchemists," says Cornelius Agrippa, "and I have seen it made."§ Geber of Seville,

* Roderici Toletani de Reb. Hisp. Lib. iii. c. 18.

† De Occult. Phil. Lib. i. c. 48.

‡ Id. Lib. iii.

§ Id. Lib. i. 14.

* P. l. q. cxiv. art. 4.

† Sept. Hist. Lib. iii. 13. ‡ Rad. Coggesh.

in the eighth or ninth century, was one of the first in this track. Trithemius mentions many who were deceived by it. He was himself accused by Boville. "This Boville," says he, writing to Ganoy, "affirms, that I, Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim, was a magician, necromancer, and alchemist. I cite you to answer for this calumny, at the tribunal of God: I declare that I never so much as entered a theatre of alchemy." Wernher, of the Counts of Falckenstein, archbishop of Treves, left such a treasure, that he was accused of alchemy. Trithemius says, "that he has seen books on it written by him, and that in his castle on the Rhine, called Capella, opposite Lanstein, he had professors of that vanity at work secretly. John, of the marquesses of Baden, who was his successor in that see, was similarly accused on account of his keeping during twelve years, in his castle of Cungen, George, from Croatia, who was said to have run away from the Turks. Bernard, abbot of Northheim, in Saxony, left 10,000 florins at his death to his monastery, which it was thought he had gained by alchemy. Andreas, another abbot, near Bamberg, was also addicted to it, as was likewise John, the last count of Spanheim, who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, in company with Louis the bearded, count Palatine of the Rhine, for he had always alchemists, necromancers, and magicians, at his court, whom he could not be induced to banish, and he thought that he could understand the language of dogs and birds."*

But we must not remain any longer on this demoniac ground. In justice, however, to the men of former times we cannot leave it without making a few observations in conclusion. If interrogated as to their opinions respecting the possible existence of such a tradition as that to which magical arts have been ascribed, the most favourable reply that could be expected from philosophers of the present day would probably be that of Orlando, "I sometimes do believe, and sometimes do not." Yet some men of great intelligence and discernment, who have travelled in the east, are ready at the present day to attest their conviction that the effects of imposture or credulity cannot explain all things that were presented to them as marvellous in those countries. The facts related by Lane, and observed by many other travellers in Egypt, relating to the power of magicians, are not less as-

tounding than any thing found in records of the tenth century. They assure us that there are men professing Satanic magic, who can communicate by their mirror of ink, placed in the hand of certain persons, the exact image of others at a distance, whom they are desired to produce. Some, it is true, suppose, contrivance, and rest that opinion upon the testimony of Jannissaries to themselves, but other and no less unimpeachable witnesses profess their inability to explain the mystery by any natural cause. One instance mentioned is that of a young English lady, who, on looking into the magic mirror in her hand, after a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without any one holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer.* But whatever may be our conclusions respecting such pretensions it must not be forgotten that, whether they be credited or not, the books of magicians are themselves monuments existing and constituting insurmountable evidence to prove the atrocity of magic study: Not that it is easy to discover who were really devoted to it; for, as Tertullian says, "Nihil magis curant, quam occultare quod prædicant, si tamen prædicant quæ occultant."† The maxim of the book on magic entitled *Arbatel* is this:—"Qui vult secreta scire, secreta secreta sciat custodire et revelanda revelet: sigilanda sigillet, et sacram non det canibus." Nothing can have a greater show of piety and judgment than their first address. Jerome Cardan says that his father, who was so much occupied with the occult sciences, used to have always on his tongue that sentence, "Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum quia ipse est fons omnium virtutum."‡

"Magician!" replies the youth Alfonso to the monk who bids him beware of Petro of Apono, "so you, too, would take part in the folly of the rabble, that is unable to appreciate the knowledge of lofty spirits, and would rather credit any absurdity than strengthen their own souls by gazing upon the grandeur of a fellow creature. Did not you yourself see and hear how piously, how Christianly, with what a heart-stirring majesty, the glorious man spake?"§

Cornelius Agrippa dedicates his books on occult philosophy to no less a person than the reverend abbot of Hirschau, John Trithemius, and says to him, "When, of

* Lane's Egypt, i.

† In Valent. c. 1.

‡ Hieron. Card. de Vita Propria, i. 3.

§ Tiek.

• Chronic. Hirsaug. An. MCCCXCIX.

late, I conversed with you, reverend father, in your monastery at Herbipolis, we talked together on many things concerning magic and cabalistic matters, and other hidden sciences and arts, which are secrets as yet." So artfully written are his three books, that he obtained this approbation from the abbot:—"Of your work, which the most learned of the learned is not able to praise sufficiently, we approve." In fact, it is full of erudition, and there are many passages which one might suppose to have been written by a Thomas of Kempis or a Louis of Blois. The author seems to abhor impiety; and he reckons among those who have vindicated occult philosophy from that crime, and have transmitted it purely, Roger Bacon, Robert the Englishman, Peter Apponus, Albert Teutonicus, Arnold de Villeneuve, Anselm of Parma, Picatricius of Spain, Cicchus Asculus of Florence, and many others. We know already what to think of his sincerity in counting some of these among men who wrote in favour of occult philosophy, and in placing them by the side of Peter Apono and Anselm; the latter of whom was admitted to be a magician by Delvio and Bartholomew Cocles. Moreover, that every thing holy may be imitated, in the beginning of his work he declares that he wishes no man to assent to whatever he may say, or to imagine that he himself assents to it, unless so far as it is not reprobated by the Catholic Church and the body of the faithful. He styles magic the most perfect and the highest science, the most holy philosophy, and the absolute consummation of wisdom.* Yet he reckons among its pillars Zamolxis and Zoroaster, Abbaris, Charmondas, Damigeron, Hermippus, Trimegistus, Porphyrius, Jamblichus, Proclus, Plotinus, Germa Babylonicus, Apollonius Thyaneus, Osthanes, and others. So here we begin to see light, when the pillars of his most holy science are heathens and notorious magicians. But one must wade through many obscure pages before coming to this frank avowal of the diabolic tradition. The prayers of these men for wisdom, for memory, for power over others to lead them from evil, are really sublime and astonishing.†

"Let the word of God never depart from your lips," says Arbatel on magic; "accustom thyself to constancy and gravity in thy words and actions; fly worldly things; seek celestial; learn not many things, but much;

invoke me in the day of tribulation, and I will hear thee—but all ignorance is tribulation of mind; invoke the Lord, therefore, in thy ignorance, and he will hear thee. Let the Sacred Scriptures be in thy hands by day, and yet by night: a magician ought to be a pious man, good and constant in words and actions, firm of faith towards God, and avaricious of nothing except wisdom."*

Such is the style of all these writers. The Chiromancians alleged Scripture for their science, and cited the words, "Qui in manu omnium hominum signat, ut noverint singuli opera sua."† Cornelius Agrippa says, that a true magician must be pure, and holy, and devout. Yet, while his general language might be mistaken for that of a cloistered ascetic, while he lifts up the soul, and seems to guide it heavenward with words and images of inspiration, bearing his scholar as with the wings of the Spirit into regions above the earth, every now and then, amidst these beautiful sentences and solemn prayers, some expression occurs to startle one—some dark letter—something of pure paganism, as it were a cloven foot peeping from under the religious habit.‡ Thus, after saying that the mind must be purified and expiated by cleanness, abstinence, penance, and alms—suddenly, as if forgetting his part, he cites the authority of the Indian Brahmins, and prescribes the use of cabalistic words. He even recommends the practice of confession, to procure that purity of conscience which is requisite for such studies; and then he lets escape that the object in view has been obtained by the ancient philosophers, who, by solitude and keeping aloof from all human affairs, were enabled to converse with sacred and celestial beings. Strangely at variance with the sanctity of his rules is his mention of the forms familiar to the spirit of Saturn—a bearded king riding on a dragon, an old bearded man, an old woman leaning on a staff, a pig, an owl, a black vest, a juniper. The atrocious cruelty of some of his prescriptions is also enough to awaken suspicion. Thus he says, when you collect the tongue of a frog, you must not kill the creature, but send it back alive into the water; and similarly, in extracting the eye or tooth of a wolf, you must not kill the animal.§ I then, as if warned by the subject, he seems in some parts to throw off the disguise, and shows how men are to compose the book of

* Lib. i. c. 2.

† Ars Notoria, quam Creator Salomoni revelavit.

* Arbatel de Magia.

† Job.

‡ De Occult. Phil. Lib. iii. c. 53.

§ 1. 21.

spirits, or order for invocation, written on virgin parchment : it is to be carefully preserved, and never opened excepting under the proper circumstances ; it is to be consecrated, by invoking to a circle all the spirits inscribed within it : the book is to be placed without the circle, in a triangle, and they are then charged to ratify and confirm it. For this operation the book of spirits is placed between two tablets, on the inside of which are written the sacred pentacula of the Divine Majesty, from the first chapter of the Apocalypse. Then on a serene night, before twelve o'clock, the book is carried to a circle at the juncture of three ways, and there the spirits inscribed are conjured thrice, by the bonds of the book, to come to that place at the end of three days. Then the book is wrapped in clean linen and buried in the midst of the circle, which is afterwards effaced. One departs before sunrise. On the third day, before midnight, one returns, makes the circle, prays on bended knees, opens the foss with a quoit, takes up the book, and without opening it, departs.* About to invoke bad spirits, he says, "You must prepare a table in the place covered with clean linen, on which are four loaves and water, or milk, in new earthen vessels, with new knives ; and you must sit at the head of the table, leaving seats round it for the spirits ; but if you fear them, describe a circle round your own seat and part of the table, while the rest is without it."

But somewhat too much of this. John Trithemius, in his apologetic preface to his books, *De Steganographia*, addressed to Philip, Duke of Bavaria, describes various kinds of magicians, and recommends the prince to extirpate them. "The demons," he says, "in order to keep voluntarily in their service the men who have made a pact with them, pretend that they are subject to them, and feign to obey them by constraint. What evils this pernicious race causes in your empire no one can express. The necromancers profess arts worthy of all execration, by which they can call demons to a circle, and bind them with a pact. They use shameful sacrifices, and write books full of turpitude and lies falsely citing the names of ancient philosophers and wise men, to deceive the curious."

To all occult sciences the philosophy of the clean of heart was essentially opposed, on the very ground of their being occult. St. Augustin applies the command, "take no purse with you," to the duty of having no secret wisdom. "What is a purse?—

money shut up, that is, occult wisdom. A fountain ought to be in you, not a purse—whence you may diffuse, not where you may confine."* St. Hilary, commenting on our Lord's words, "*Quod dico vobis in tenebris*," says, "We do not read that our Lord was accustomed to discourse by night, and to deliver his doctrine in darkness ; but he used this expression because all his sentences are darkness to the carnal mind, and his word is night to infidels."† It was opposed to these sciences, too, on the ground of their vanity ; and this is shown by Dante, when Grifolino of Arezzo relates how he had told Albero of Sienna that he had learned to wing his flight in air ; for he adds,—

"And he, admiring much, as he was void
Of wisdom, will'd me to declare to him
The secret of mine art."‡

It was opposed to them, also, on the ground of the misery which they entailed on men ; for the church had yearly to lament some intellectual wreck, and cry,

"——— this is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality."

It was opposed to them, above all, from a deep sense of their guilt ; which Dante also indicates in that passage where he shows diviners and prophets among the spirits whelmed in woe :—

"A tribe that came along the hollow vale,
In silence weeping—
Each wondrously seem'd to be revers'd
At the neck-bone, so that the countenance
Was from the reins averted.
—— Lo ! how he makes
The breast his shoulder, and who once too far
Before him wish'd to see, now backward looks,
And treads reverse his path.
See next the wretches who the needle left,
The shuttle, and the spindle, and became
Diviners !—baneful witcheries they wrought,
With images and herbs."§

Finally, it was opposed to them, as feeling that to the clean of heart who beheld God their light was as darkness. Men without the church have, in all ages, been addicted more or less to errors and vanities, which on their conversion to it they learned to despise. St. Augustin confesses ingenuously that he used to take pleasure, before his conversion, in the study of judicial astrology, but that he abandoned all faith in it when he returned to religion.

* Serm. 42, *De Sanct.*

† Comm. in *Matt. x.*

‡ *Hell. xxix.*

§ *XX.*

* *De Occult. Phil. Lib. iv.*

Cardan says, that a great chest could not contain all the letters he had received from the English demanding predictions, from the Germans demanding calculations, from the Italians asking for medicines, and from the French requiring moral discourses. But towards the end of his life he discerned their vanity; so that he says, "I destroyed many of my books, which had cost me great labour; for whatever did not conduce to the salvation of the human race, if it could also injure, I resolved not to leave existing; and though it might have been better not to have written, yet it is with writers as with animals, which cannot live without leaving traces."* How many converts, in modern times, have similarly been corrected and induced to give up a thousand prejudices and singularities which had once charmed them.

The neighbourhood of the Moors in Spain contributed to develop the taste for the study of occult sciences, but men were not wanting to oppose it with learning and ability. The work of John Francis Picus of Mirandula, entitled *De Rerum Prænotione*, furnished a curious and able refutation of superstition; and the work of his great uncle against astrologers was still more remarkable. The holy fathers and the schoolmen had acquired a deep insight into the different superstitions of the world, with a view to war against them.

"I have given my heart to know prudence and doctrine, and errors and folly: it is of true devotion, therefore," adds Richard of St. Victor, "to contemplate both good and evil, to investigate, discuss, and subsequently to judge all things. True devotion, consequently, from investigation and inquiry, has something in common with the wise men of Babylon; so that, deservedly, it may be said to be of their college. Nevertheless, they differ by the intention; for true devotion investigates vain and perverse doctrines, not for the sake of adhering to them, or of placing any confidence in them, but that, by judging, it may disprove and condemn them."†

"We read some books," says St. Ambrose, "in order that they may not be read; we read lest we should not know what they were; we read not to approve, but to condemn, and that we may learn on what ground these proud men exalt their hearts."‡ This was conformable to the text which

saith, "The disciple of wisdom knows ancient things, and conjectures the future; he knows the turning of words and the solution of enigmas; signs and prodigies he foresees, and the events of seasons and times."*

St. Dunstan, amidst his multifarious learning, is said to have been conversant with the magic songs and incantations of his pagan forefathers. The abbot Trithemius, himself a man exceedingly well read and profited in strange concealments, shows that, in order to refute them, it was lawful to read hastily the books of the astrologers. Among his own writings he enumerates five books to John Marquis of Brandenburg, *contra maleficos et omnes artes vanos superstitiosas et Christianæ religioni contrarias*, twenty books, *naturalium questionum*; and two books against Boville. "Without learning, without having studied their own science, how could my uncle Picus of Mirandula," says John Francis, "have written that admirable work against the astrologers? St. Jerome says, if any one were to write against the mathematicians without having studied mathematics, he would be only laughed at for his pains. To read my uncle's work, you would suppose that he had read nothing but the books of the astrologers: therefore, did he undermine them. Who of the ancients ever slew astrology, that monster, like a hydra, which, as often as one head was cut off, used to push forth another, until Picus, not a feigned but a true Hercules, destroyed her with the learning of tongues and the fire of divine love."†

Of this work Savonarola, who also wrote against the tradition of the astrologers, says, "He who reads and understands it, and does not laugh at the science which it confutes and annihilates, certainly deserves himself to be laughed at by all men."‡

So far we have been replying to those adversaries who charge the church with unreasonable severity and superstition in combating superstition. It remains to consider upon what ground others accuse her of having been herself obnoxious to the charge of exciting and perpetuating superstition in the society of the middle ages. We have already seen enough to enable us to appreciate the value of such witnesses as the late author of *Letters on*

* *De Libris Propriis.*

† *De Eruditione Hom. Inter. p. i. Lib. ii. c. 7.*

‡ *Expos. Evang. Luc. i. 2.*

* *Sap. vii. 17.*

† *Joan. F. P. Mirand. de Studio Divinæ et Hum. Philo. Lib. i. c. 7.*

‡ *H. Savonarolæ Triumph. Crucis, Lib. iv. c. 4.*

Demonology, who says, that the clergy were resolved to nourish the belief in witches, as a source both of power and revenue knowing that a faith in all the absurdities of the vulgar creed was necessary to maintain their influence. "Did there remain," he asks, "a mineral fountain respected for the cures which it had wrought, a huge oak tree, or venerated mount recommended to traditional respect,—the fathers of the Roman church were in policy reluctant to abandon such impressive spots, or to represent them as exclusively the rendezvous of witches or evil spirits. They assigned the virtue to the guardianship of some saint, and thus acquired a frontier fortress for their own doctrine."

Though such are the views with which the most popular English author writes history, I cannot delay to make any reply to such passages. When a heedless contradiction of all historic testimonies is substituted for argument, the folly is in him who stays to answer. The strongest ground in appearance, on which the opinion which I combat can be defended, must be sought for in the facts respecting ordeals, and the abuse to which religious practices were liable; yet neither of these positions can be maintained when a knowledge of history is brought to bear upon them. "Could a person during some Christian ages," asks Lenglet Du Fresnoy, "have questioned the proof of hot iron without being regarded as impious?"* This is a strange question from a learned man. The canons and the sovereign pontiffs every where condemned the vulgar purgations or judgments of God by cold or hot water and iron, or by battle,—all which the barbarians brought with them into Christendom,† though their traces can be found in the Greek poets. St. Avitus, in presence of King Gundobad, condemning judicial combats, and the king arguing that they were necessary, for the same reason as wars were necessary between nations, to determine the judgment of God,—the saint replied, "If kings and nations seek the divine judgment, let them first fear what is written by the Psalmist, 'Disipa gentes quæ bella volunt;' and let them remember that sentence, 'Mihi vindictam: ego retribuam, dicit Dominus.' Cannot the Supreme Equity judge causes without swords and weapons? And do we not

often find that the just side is worsted in battle, and that the unjust triumphs?"*

Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, composed a treatise entitled, "*Contra damnabilem Opinionem putantium Divini Judicii Veritatem Igne vel Aquis, vel Conflictu Armorum pateferi.*" He condemned them as wanting divine authority, as rash, profane, and injurious to God. The ordeals were imposed by the civil legislation, and resisted by the councils. Pope Lucius III. declares that these sorts of proofs are prohibited by the canons. The council of Tribur merely permitted the trial of hot iron in acquiescence with the laws of the state, where there was no other way possible. In the time of Hincmar these ordeals were all styled "*ad inventiones humani arbitrii.*"‡ By the council of Valence, in 855, under King Lothaire, judicial combats were condemned: the victor was pronounced excommunicated, and the body of the slain was forbidden Christian burial. When this King Lothaire afterwards wished to submit his cause to the judgment of the sword, Pope Nicholas I. remonstrated, and showed him that such a proceeding was against the divine ordinance.

In the eleventh century, Hildebert, a bishop, writes to Ives de Chartres, to ask whether he ought to undergo the trial by ordeal, in compliance with the requisition of the King of England; who replies to him, "that the church knows of no such custom in ecclesiastical cases. Do not, then, transgress," he adds, "the ancient limits placed by our fathers—*aliter namque innocentiam defendere est innocentiam perdere.*"§ In fact, Ives de Chartres wrote many letters against the ordeals, in which he showed their absurdity, and cited the words of Pope Stephen V. forbidding them as superstitious inventions, when Lambert, bishop of Mayence, inquired whether he could permit the old usage. Ives reproves the clergy of Orleans for having sanctioned a judicial combat; "but," says Stephen Pasquier, "the real fact was that it was difficult to reverse the ancient usage which prevailed so much under the third race of French kings. The First of the French Kings who prohibited it was St. Louis, whose prohibition was afterwards renewed by Philip Le Bel."§ The personal remonstrances of holy men were, however, often

* L'Hist. Justifiée, 186.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canon. Lib. iii. tit. ix. § 1.

* Agobardus Lib. advers. Legem Guadobadi.

† Le Brun, Hist. de Sup. tom. ii. 236.

‡ Ivon. Carnot. Epist. lxxiv.

§ Recherches de la France, iv. 1.

efficacious against it. Thus John Seigneur de Baugency, in 1186, was so touched at a censure which he received from the abbot of St. Maximin, for having assigned day and place for a single combat to verify a right which he claimed, that he chose rather to renounce his claim than go that extremity.*

The Popes Sylvester II., Celestin III., Alexander III., and Innocent III., reiterated the prohibitions of the trials of God.† Innocent declares that the judgments in the secular courts, of cold water, hot iron, and the duel, are invalid by the sacred canons, which deem null and void all extorted confessions.‡ Innocent, after solemn deliberation with his brethren, declares that a certain bishop, because he had lent his authority to a judgment of hot iron, and had exhibited his corporal presence at it, is unworthy of the ministry at the altar, and consequently deprives him of his episcopal office.§ The same pontiff declares that the ecclesiastical authority rejects all ordeals on the ground of the sacred text, "Non tentabis Dominum Deum tuum."|| This was according to the decision of the scholastics. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais' work says, "that the judgment of hot iron or water is superstitious and unlawful, because its object is to discover hidden things, which are reserved for the divine judgment, and also because for such a method there is no sanction of divine authority."¶

The council of Lateran, in 1215, absolutely prohibited all ecclesiastics from authorizing, by any benediction, the ordeals of water or iron, and in fact the practice was every where completely abolished in the thirteenth century. Even Sir Matthew Hale says, "The trial by ordeal seems to have ended with King John. Perchance the barbarousness of the trial and persuasions of the clergy prevailed at length to antiquate it; for many canons had been made against it." "The canon law," says his commentator, "very early declared against it, upon this authority. Though the canons themselves," he adds, with amusing simplicity, "were of no validity in England, it was thought proper to abolish this mode of trial by an act of parliament, in the third year of

Henry III., or rather by an order of the king in council."

With respect to the charge founded on the abuse to which religious practices were liable, we shall find a satisfactory answer by pursuing the same obvious method of calmly interrogating history. Evidence will then be found to prove that such abuse existed not where there was much but where there was little piety—not where the clergy exerted themselves with zeal, but where they slept—not where the voice of the Holy See prevailed, but where that of the opinions opposed to it were predominant. It is even a singular fact, that the men whom most prided themselves on their jealousy of the Holy See were in general the most superstitious, as may be witnessed in Stephen Pasquier, the doughty champion of the Gallican liberties, who is continually alluding to omens and prognostics.

The superstitious use or application of what is intrinsically good and holy belongs to the corruption of our fallen nature. The object of the Catholic philosophy, however, was not to destroy what was good and holy, but to prevent men from abusing it. The ceremonies and practices of religion might easily have been abused, say modern writers. True: but what may not easily be abused? Who has ever walked on a serene evening, and seen the moon rise suddenly in the east, without feeling how easy it was for men to fall upon their faces and adore it. Are we to condemn the Creator, then, for the beauty and glory of his works, because the unclean of heart could not behold and magnify Him in them? The ecclesiastical spirit, in this respect, may be witnessed in the character ascribed to Pope St. Gregory VII. by old writers. "This most holy man," say they, "was a determined reprehender of all such superstitious customs in the church as crept in among the multitude, through rustic simplicity, without the authority of Scripture."* And similarly we read of Benedict XIII., that when archbishop of Siponti he was particularly attentive lest ignorance, superstition, curiosity, or frivolity in some, fraud or cupidity in others, might give occasion to abuses at Mount Gargano—that church socelebrated since the fifth century. He went there often for his own edification, but he also went to instruct the simple pilgrims who flocked there from all parts; and he examined the conduct of the clergy, and made many wise regulations to preserve

* Bernier, *Hist. de Blois*, 259.

† Decret. tit. 35. De Purgatione Vulgari.

‡ Inn. III. Epist. Lib. v. 107.

§ Id. Lib. xiii. 134.

|| Id. Lib. xiv. 138.

¶ Spec. Mor. p. iii. Lib. iii. 27.

* Guil. Neubrig. iii. 20.

the purity of divine worship, and to guard off every thing that could corrupt it.* Incidental notices of similar zeal might easily be multiplied, as where Paradin mentions the discovery of a superstition practised on the eve of St. Stephen, made by the precentor of the old church of St. Stephen at Lyons.†

We find the church sometimes obliged to guard the people from entertaining extravagant notions of obligations resulting from a reception of solemn rites, as in the instance formerly alluded to, of a popular error in the thirteenth century respecting extreme unction. Richard, bishop of Salisbury in 1218, the fathers of the synod of Worcester in 1240, those assembled at Exeter in 1288, and at Winchester in 1308, denounced and prohibited such superstition.‡ That children born on the ember days were more capable of having familiarity with spirits, was another superstitious fancy, which some attempted to associate with religion.§ But here, surely, the clergy were not in fault. The usage of supernatural remedies was not inconsistent with the employment of measures recommended by sober reason and exact science. Pope Stephen V., in the year 885, when locusts desolated the country about Rome, had recourse, first, to the latter offering money to whoever destroyed a certain number; and this failing, he used supernatural means, and appointed prayers and aspersions.

The zeal of the clergy in the eleventh century, against superstitious devotion, may be strikingly witnessed in the fourth book of Guibert de Nogent, *De Pignoribus Sanctorum*, which is entitled "*De Interiori Mundo*." "Pious Jesu!" he exclaims, "how many saints whose end is doubtful, and yet before I pray to one I ought to be assured of his sanctity. There are many of whom we know neither the birth, nor the life, nor the death; and although the faithful honour them for the name of sanctity, yet the priests do not judge rightly who do not censure and amend the vulgar; for the zeal which the people have towards God ought to be according to knowledge, lest they should sin through ignorance. He who ascribes to God what he never thought, as far as in him lies makes God to lie. If any one were to accuse me, a

miserable mortal, of falsehood, or of doing what I did not, it would fill me with horror; and what more fatal, more desperate, more damnable, than to ascribe falsely any thing to God, the fountain of all purity?" If this writer goes on to expose the deceitful practices of some monks, with respect to false relics, and encouraging the people to believe persons saints without just reason, it should be remembered that he himself who speaks thus is a monk, revered by his fellow monks, and an abbot venerable among abbots. Besides, it must not be forgotten that such an abuse had been carefully provided against, as by the fathers of the council of Frankfort in 794, who decreed that no new saints should be honoured excepting when the authenticity of the acts of their martyrdom, or the sanctity of their lives, warranted their being judged worthy of reverence in the church.* In the year 806, Charlemagne, by a capitulary, prohibited his subjects from rendering homage to any new saints without the approbation of the bishop. "Some," continues Guibert, "ascribing the greatest antiquity to their saints, desire their lives to be written in modern times. This is often sought from me; but what truth can I affirm of those whom no one ever saw? If I should say what I have heard said, and I am asked to speak in praise of these ignoble persons, both I and those who desired me to say such things would deserve to be publicly held as no longer trustworthy. The head of the Baptist is said to be at Constantinople; and again, the people of Angers say it is with them. What can be more ridiculous?—as if he were double-headed! If they mutually dispute about its possession, and accuse each other, they are doing not divine but diabolic works. If it be the head of another saint, still a falsehood is not a moderate evil." Finally, however, he restrains a zeal which was almost leading him too far, and says, "Some think that when relics of one saint are mistaken for those of another, the error is pernicious to the people, which is not my opinion; for when the Lord says of them, 'that they may be one as we are one'—when the whole universe of saints, under Christ their head, is as it were one body,—there is no error if the bones of one be venerated for those of another; since all are united fellow members in the body of their author. Nor do I imagine that God will refuse to hear the

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. iv. Lib. 41.

† *Hist. de Lyons*, Lib. i. 41.

‡ Mabillon, *Præfat. in l. Sec. Bened.* § 9.

§ *Thyræus de Apparit. Spirit.*

† Longueval, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. v. 31.

simple, when they invoke Him even by those that are not saints; for if they faithfully believe those to be saints who are said to be such, their prayer cannot but please God, to whom all prayer is made, even though they should have been deceived; for they who in the name of a prophet received the prophet, are to receive a prophet's reward. The illiterate, no doubt, often lie in their prayers; but God regards intentions, not words. God is not curious of grammar; no voice moves him; He looks at the heart.*

With respect to the recognised practices of devotion in the church, there seems to be no reason to doubt but that the piety of the people during ages of faith was as enlightened and as far removed from any thing like superstition, as the most cautious philosopher could desire. "Of false honour," said St. Bernard, "there is no need to the blessed Virgin, on whom are accumulated its true titles." All exaggeration was foreign to genuine piety. Those who have studied with attention the spirit and manners of the Catholic society in any age will feel perfectly satisfied on this head: non enim philosophi solum verum etiam majores nostri superstitionem à religione separaverant. Cowley, relating a vision which he had, says, "that he fortified himself privately with the sign of the cross;" adding, "not out of any superstition to the sign, but as a recognition of his baptism in Christ."† The distinction only shows that he had been conversant not with Catholics, but with those who misrepresented and ridiculed their faith.

Of other popular opinions in the middle ages, generally classed under the head of superstition, a thoughtful observer will probably be disposed to take a different view, and to conclude that they admit of being transferred to different ground, and otherwise defended. "We have seen many future things truly predicted by just men on their death beds," says Guibert de Nogent, in the very work in which he combats superstition.‡ William of Paris, in his book *De Virtutibus*, says, "you should know that the gift of intelligence is of such brightness and intensity in some men, that it very much resembles the spirit of prophecy, such as some persons believed to have been in the abbot Joachim, though he himself is said to have said of himself, that there was not given to him

the spirit of prophecy, but the spirit of intelligence." "Consider, if you can," says Richard of St. Victor, "how much the thought of future things avails with God, which is so often divinely rewarded by a revelation of the future. Hear a man solicitous for the future, and occupied with its interests: Nunquid in æternum projiciet Deus et non apponet ut complacitior sit adhuc? Aut in finem misericordiam suam abscondet à generatione in generationem? Hear the same man taught of the same, and profoundly illuminated in the things about which he inquired: Miserator et misericors Dominus, longanimis et multum misericors, non in perpetuum irascetur neque in æternum comminabitur."* Truly there is satisfactory evidence to prove that the prophetic spirit was not wanting in ages of faith.† The Blessed Hugo de Dina predicted the destruction of the Templars long before that event took place, after they had been 184 years gloriously militant. Being at Marseilles in 1278, these knights showed him their long and beautiful refectory, which he curiously sought to measure twice or thrice, and upon their asking him what he thought of it, he replied, that it would be an excellent stable. They took umbrage at his reply; but the event verified his words, when under Clement V. their institute was destroyed, and Robert, king of Sicily, coming to Marseilles, converted it into a stable. This is he who is buried honourably with the Minors in that city, or who after death shone with miracles.‡ St. Liudger foretold, that after his death the Normans would come down and destroy the churches, and lay waste the country, but that the time of mercy would afterwards arrive.§ That the curiosity of vain men should have been strongly excited by the report of such things, was a natural consequence; and hence many wild legends became current, such as this, which, Orderic Vitalis tells us, the Norman princes used to relate. In the time of Rollo, they used to say, a certain mysterious stranger was received to hospitality by a knight into his hotel at Rouen. While seated in the chimney with his host, the latter began to question him about many things, and principally about Rollo, asking him,

* De Erudit. Hom. inter. Lib. i. P. 1. 19.

† Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 202. ii. 209.

‡ Wadding, An. Min. vol. v. 1278.

§ Vita ejus Mahil. Acta. S. Ord. Ben. Sæc. iv. P. 1.

* De Pignoribus Sanct. Lib. i. c. 4.

† A Discourse concerning Oliver Cromwell.

‡ De Fig. Sanct. Lib. i. c. 2.

whether his race would endure long. He replied, that it would, and that his dutchy would exist in vigour till the seventh generation. Upon the host then asking him, what would happen after the seventh generation, he wished to make no reply, but only began to trace furrows in the ashes of the hearth with a little piece of wood that he held in his hand. The host persisting in his attempt to draw an answer from him, as to what would happen after the seventh generation, he, with the little piece of wood which he kept ever in his hand, began to efface the furrows which he had made in the ashes: from which one thought that, after the seventh generation, he implied that the dutchy would be destroyed, or suffer great tribulation, which we have seen accomplished, says the writer of the supplement to the History of William of Jumièges; for Henry, the late king, was the seventh of this line, and the first who possessed till his death Normandy and England. We may remark, however, that the race of prophets, which was so multiplied in countries that embraced the new opinions, ever predicting, as in London in times of calamity, the vengeance of God and the end of the world, was not allowed to abuse the people in the middle ages. An instance occurred in Germany, in the year 847, when the pretended prophetess was condemned, by the ecclesiastical authority at Mayence, to be publicly scourged.*

It is true, some of the old errors still lingered, and faith, which puts an end to them, satisfying the natural desire of the human mind, could not enter where hearts were yet unclean.

Dark time had there its evil legend wrought

In characters of cloud, which wither not:
The change was like a dream to them; but soon

They knew the glory of their altered lot,
In the bright wisdom of youth's breathless noon,
Sweet talk, and smiles, and sighs, all bosoms
did attune.

We have before alluded to the joy diffused around the feudal hearth, when pilgrims would begin, "I will tell you now what never yet was heard in tale or song, from old or modern bard, in hall or bower." We then heard some mention of the legends respecting dead men returning to the living, of the curious anecdotes related by holy and observant men, who were in point of truth heroical. But the

fact undoubtedly is, that the clean of heart beholding God, had many thoughts in common with the illiterate, which pass with men who read in books alone for fabulous: religion sanctioned, philosophy confirmed many of these wanderer's tales, founded upon a wide observation of nature, and attested by faithful witnesses; so that, as the poet says,

— Ever as they sailed, their minds were full
Of love and wisdom, which would overflow
In converse wild and sweet and wonderful.

So many and so grave are the testimonies, both heathen and Christian, to the reality of apparitions, that even the cautious Cardinal Bona says, "It is wonderful how any man of sane mind can be found to deny them, or ascribe them to a deluded imagination."* The modern writers themselves observe, that "their abstract possibility must be admitted by every one who believes in a Deity and his superintending omnipotence." Let us hear a narrative fitted for rehearsal when next we pace up and down some long Gothic chamber at the twilight hour. Peter the Venerable relates a vision which he had at Rome, in the monastery of Santa Maria Nuova. William, the late Prior of Cluni, who had shortly before died, appeared to him, and spoke, in reply to the questions put to him by the abbot, respecting his own happy state, the vision of God, the certainty of the Christian faith, and the cause of his own death, which he affirmed weeping to have been by poison: "So it was afterwards proved," he adds, "on my return to France, by the public confession of the prisoner. During all the time that this vision lasted I felt conscious that I was not sleeping, and I proposed my questions in the shortest manner possible, from supposing that he could not remain long conversing with the living. I awoke weeping."† The denunciations of the church against superstitious interpreters of dreams, were not inconsistent with the words of Dante,—

"Sleep, that bringeth oft tidings of future hap."‡

The Emperor Henry III., indeed, involved himself in censures when, having had a dream respecting Hildebrand, then a young novice, which was interpreted to forebode that he would be the cause of de-

* De Discretione Spirituum, cap. xix.

† Pet. Ven. De Miraculis, Lib. ii. cap. 25.

‡ Purg. xxvii.

* Ann. Metens. ad an. 847.

prising Henry's son of the crown, he cast him into prison. "He commanded," says the old chronicle, "that the clerk should be thrown into a dungeon in the castle of Hammerstein; but when the Empress often objected to the Emperor, that forgetful of his own honour, he had imprisoned a scholar on account of a vain dream, after the expiration of one year he gave orders for his deliverance, soon after which the novice became a monk."*

What the church combatted was the superstitious curiosity. Her axiom was—

"Seek not to know what must not be reveal'd,
Joys only flow where future is concealed:
Too busy man would find his sorrows more,
If, what was coming, he should know before."

She did not however teach men to reject historic testimony, in order to deny the possibility of such forewarnings. "It is not lawful for any one to doubt," says Cardinal Bona, "but that some dreams are true, and sent from God."† Calixtus II. had a divine intimation of what awaited him, in a dream, the night before his arrival in the monastery of Cluni, where, without his suspecting the circumstance, the Pope Gelasius II. had died, and where he was himself elected to succeed him the moment after his arrival. Baptist the Mantuan, the Carmelite poet, writes to John Francis Picus of Mirandula, and says that he believes he saw John Picus his uncle, after his departure from life, in a dream which he had about break of day, and that he discoursed with him about points of philosophy: "I awoke," saith he, "and felt persuaded that I had seen something. I write this not that I yield any faith to dreams, for that is alien both from my profession and my nature, but because I cannot sufficiently admire how a sleeping man could dispute, and teach, and learn, and do what, if he had been awake, would have been impossible, or very difficult for him to have done. Truly our souls are divine, and if we live holily and piously, and keep ourselves free from the trammels of secular affairs, these separated spirits have great commerce with us. The death of George Merula, my condisciple, and afterwards my preceptor, affected me with sadness, but he was aged and useless for any office: the lamentable fate of those two illustrious men, Hermolaus and Politian, caused to me and to all men of letters a

pang of heart, but this wound is deeper still; and in Picus, learning has had even a greater loss."*

Marsilius Ficinus, in a letter to Matthew Corseno, his fellow philosopher, gives many instances of the death of parents and friends being revealed to persons at a distance at the moment of their departure.† Celebrated was the account of the Marquis de Rambouillet appearing, with his wound in the groin, to the Marquis de Précî, his friend, at six o'clock in the morning at Paris, the same moment that he received his death in Flanders, the next post bringing the intelligence.‡

Beyond a doubt there was much error and absurdity connected with the belief in such things, and men might have often reaped great benefit from consulting the book of Eginus Augustus Libertus, entitled "*Palaphatus de non credendis Fabulis*:" we should not then perhaps have heard so much of Hugue-the-Corps, so called from his cadaverous figure, who strangled Milon de Monthéry his cousin, for the sake of his riches, and afterwards became a monk; who it was thought used, after his death, to be seen by night in the forest of St. Germain. This is silly, sooth; and who could enumerate all the romantic marvels which were associated in young heads during days of chivalry, with the forest of Broceliande alone? Such wild tales as Pliny mentions, and Olaus the Great relates of northern seas, may be ascribed rather to the want of sufficient observation, than to a positive superstition. Others must be traced to the barbarous legends of the Scandinavian tribes; as when we read of the castle of King Hrothgar being nightly visited after supper by the horrible Grendel, silent, joyless fiend, who comes from the morasses of the mountains, and enters the hall, seizes the sleeping warriors and devours their feet and hands, whom Beowulf overcomes; when the mother of Grendel comes there, eager to revenge her son's defeat, stalks at midnight into the court to glut herself with victims, but is put to flight by the knights: when afterwards the two demons used to be seen roaming over the moors, howling like wolves, their abode being deep in the dark waters stagnant there. Others again may be ascribed to some optical deception or atmospheric effect. Baptist Fulgosus, Duke of Genoa,

* In Menken Script. Rer. Germ. tom. iii. 88.

† De Discretionem Spirituum, c. xvi.

* Epist. Lib. ii.

† Mars. Ficin. Epist. Lib. i.

‡ Le Brun, tom. iv. 367.

relates, in the first book of his acts of great persons, that in the court of Matthieu Visconti, of Milan, there was seen, one evening after sunset, a knight armed cap-a-pie, whom many persons watched in great astonishment during the space of an hour till it vanished; when soon after died the Emperor Henry VII., who was the great friend of that family.

At the same time, that men were not "all-believing," as some now report them, may be witnessed in the judicious remarks of the monk Taillepie, in his treatise on the apparition of spirits.* If the author of the essay on the manners and spirit of nations evinced ignorance in affirming, as a critical observer, that the history of the middle ages contained nothing but barbarism, he did not err less when, wishing to admire it as a poet, he composed those verses, so often cited, which describe the pleasure of believing in fairies, of hearing chaplains relate tales of ghosts, and of enjoying what he terms the advantages of error. The spirit of scrutiny was quite as much alive then, as now, with regard to such things; and at the chimney corner, on a winter's night, the page, as well as the castellan, while listening to the palmer's tale, would turn a deaf ear to the dreams of decrepitude, and that too on the principle expressed by Æschylus, *δείματα γὰρ γράυς οὐδέν*.†

Torquemada relates many curious examples of terrific tales arising out of trivial circumstances: "Only a short time ago," he says, "at this very place where we are, a certain woman, desiring to rise very early about some affairs, and not finding any fire under the ashes, though she had carefully covered it the evening before, sent her servant out with a caudle desiring her to light it; but the servant, going from house to house, no where found any fire, it being still three hours before day; but at length she perceived a lamp burning in a church; she called to the sacristan, who was sleeping within, and he awoke and lighted her candle. The mistress, tired of waiting, had taken another candle, and had found a fire in another house, and she came out with her light just as her servant was returning with her light, and they were both in white: now a neighbour having risen, and looking out with eyes hardly open, and seeing them thus coming out, he thought they were phantoms; so that the next day there went a rumour that there had been a

procession of spirits that night round the church. However, upon close inquiry, I found that the truth was what I have now stated."* He relates another instance arising out of the solemn burial of a noble knight in a certain monastery of Spain; when a poor idiot, having strayed into the church, and remained after the doors were closed, took shelter from the cold under the great velvet pall which covered the coffin. The monks coming into the choir to sing matins, the idiot awoke and made a noise, which troubled the religious men, who, however, continued to sing their matins, and then retired. The rumour of what had been heard spread far and wide, every one adding something, till at length the poor idiot disclosed what she had done, to the great amusement of all the world." However, some of his tales are left in all the obscurity that any one who loves the wonderful could desire. "A remarkable instance occurred," he says, "about thirty years ago at a place two leagues from here, Fontaines de Rossel, where was a gentleman of great authority named Anthony Costillo; and I can bear witness that it was one of the most stout and courageous men in all this country, for I have seen him in great dangers, from which he delivered himself valiantly: but as he was a man who would not suffer any one to do him an injury, he had some that wished him no good, so that he was generally on his guard. Now it happened one day, that he went out of his house well mounted and carrying a lance in his hand, and so he rode to another village called Villanuova, where he transacted certain affairs till it was nightfall, and it became very dark, and then he prepared to return to his house; but on going out of the village there was a little hermitage, and a chapel with a lattice of wood before and a lamp burning within, and it seemed to Anthony Costillo that he ought not to pass on without saying a prayer, so he pulled his rein and began to perform his devotions, remaining on horseback; but as he looked into the chapel there seemed to him to be a certain phantom ready to advance towards him, so that, being afraid, he turned his bridle and began to ride away, but the phantom seemed to have got before him: he commended himself to God and turned back, but it was still before him; he pushed forward with his lance extended against it, but he only struck the air; if he hastened it hastened, if he stopped it stopped. In this manner

* Rouen, 1600.

† Eumenid. 38.

* Hexameron, iii.

he had it for a companion till he reached his house, before which there was a great court, and when he alighted and opened the first gate, he saw it still before him in the court; and when he came to the door and called out, and was let in, it vanished. But he remained greatly troubled, so that his wife supposed his enemies had done him some injury; and as he would not inform her what had happened, she sent for a great friend that he had, a man of authority and a learned man, who came immediately, and found him greatly changed and like dead, to whom Costillo related what had happened, and the other comforted him and persuaded him to banish the recollection of it: but on his departure, and on being left alone, the same terror again seized him, and so he continued till the seventh day, when he died." Now says one of the hearers, "if there had been some physician near him, he would have shown that it all proceeded from a melancholy humour which made him fancy that he saw really what in fact had no existence." "As for me," replies another, "I should rather ascribe it to the operation of the devil, and to the hidden judgments of God."*

In the *Roman de Rou*, a different spirit is ascribed to Richard the good Duke of Normandy, and the two tales placed thus, side by side, are remarkable as illustrating the difference between the clean of heart and the impure, on occasion of such visions. "By night wandered Richard," says the legend, "as well as by day; and from his strolling so much by night, people said that he could see as well in the dark as other men in the light. This custom he had in his wanderings, when he came to any church or monastery, he would, if he might, enter to pray; and if he might not, he would pray outside. One night, as he was riding thoughtfully along, he passed by a church, and wishing to pray to God in it, he tied his horse outside; within he found a corpse on a bier, yet close to the bier he passed, threw his gloves on a desk, and knelt before the altar; which gloves he forgot on coming away. The earth he kissed while he prayed. He thought the corpse moved: he turned round to look on it; 'Lie still,' said he, 'and move not. Be thou a good thing or a bad, rest thee in peace I say.' Then signing himself, he said, 'Per hoc signum sanctæ crucis libera me de malignis Domine Deus salutis.' Then rising to go out, he repeated, 'Lord, into thy hands I

commend my spirit.' But lo! a demon seemed to oppose himself: Richard, however, lifted his sword and smote the figure, and came out to his horse, when he discovered that he had forgotten to take up his gloves: then returned he to the church and took them. Few the men, I think, that would have entered the church a second time! After this, he gave orders that no corpse should be left alone till it was buried."

Religion thus dispelled all vain terrors; so that Dante borrowed from the common speech of men, in making that reply—

"I will instruct thee briefly why no dread
Hinders my entrance here. Those things alone
Are to be feared whence evil may proceed;
None else, for none are terrible beside."*

But the middle ages were conversant with stranger themes than any such wild legends as these. "I know it to be true," says St. Vincentius, "that a soul may return, for I had been defamed by a certain detractor, and he came, after death, and sought my pardon."† The sister of St. Thomas of Aquin, abbess of St. Mary at Capua, appeared to him after her death and told him of her state in heaven, and of the condition of his two brothers, Andulph being still in purgatory and Raynald already in paradise. Again, one night as the Angelic Doctor prayed in the church of St. Dominic at Naples, Father Romain, to whom he had ceded the chair of theology at Paris, appeared to him before the other had heard of his death, and told him that he was amongst the blessed, and answered many questions of St. Thomas; and to his query respecting heaven, replied, "*Sicut audivimus sic vidimus.*"

Trithemius, in his chronicle of Hirschan, relates the following occurrence which took place in 1321. "Godfrid was a dyer in the town of Bruchsal, in the diocese of Spire, a frequenter of drinking houses, and a singer of light songs, scurrilous, addicted to cups and tables, gesticulations and rhythmæ, and one who never thought about saving his soul. Falling sick, he had great remorse and profound sorrow; so he sent for a priest, to whom he made a devout confession, received the communion, promising aloud to do penance if God should spare him. Relapsing into silence in about an hour after, he seemed to expire—this was about seven o'clock in the evening, on the twenty-fifth of May. As the night was advancing, they

* Hell, ii.

† Drexel. de Vitiis Lingue, cap. xvi.

* Torquemada, *Hexameron*, trad. d'Espag.

would not bury him till the next day ; so during that night the neighbours assembled and sat round his body, which was placed on a bier, and talked variously about the fate of his soul. At two o'clock in the morning he sat up, and said, 'O God, how just and hidden are thy judgments! Blessed be thy name, who hath been merciful to me penitent.' All in an instant fled ; some through the window, as the door was too small, others over the people's heads, in short as they could. Godfrid rose, went into the garden, and knelt down, where he was found still kneeling at sunrise. The crowds gathered round, and the priest, who had heard his confession, came and said, 'Godfrid, how is it with you?' but he, making the cross on his mouth, said 'O wehe! O wehe!' and thus groaning, walked to the church and entered, followed by the priest and all the people. There he fell prone on the pavement before the altar, with arms extended in a cross, and remained two hours. Then rising up, he said to the priest, 'Lord, what doth this people want?' 'They wish to know,' replied the priest, 'whether you were really dead, or where you were, or how you have come back to life.' To whom he replied, 'there is a time for speaking, and a time for silence: let them go home, for they will hear nothing from me at present.' So saying, he prostrated himself again on the earth. The people, by the priest's order, left the church, all but four of the chief inhabitants with three priests: and when the crowd was gone, the priest charged Godfrid on obedience to speak. 'O good men of God!' cried he 'if I had one hundred mouths and as many tongues, I could not relate the one-thousandth part of what I have seen and heard since with those below. Yea, I was dead, and for penitence, by God's mercy, permitted to return to the body. After my soul, with incredible pressure and grief, had gone out, I was presented at the divine judgment, though how or by whom I know not. So full of sadness was I, that the whole world could not contain or understand it. All the sins of my life, to the very least, were clear and open before me. O good God what confusion, what immense calamity encompassed me! I cannot say, nor, without unutterable horror of heart, think of it: neither can I relate what was said to me by the judge, and the surrounding angels, and the demons, for it was ineffable. In a moment I was in the place of eternal and of temporal punishment, where I saw more souls tormented than I thought could ever have existed from the beginning,

or could ever exist till the end: yet I knew and understood who every one was. I saw souls in hell of whose salvation no one in this life ever doubted; and I saw souls in purgatory, reserved for salvation, whom the judgment of men had pronounced to be unquestionably in hell. Think not that the disposition, quality, and mode of punishment bore any resemblance to what painters and preachers represent: I felt that these torments could never be expressed by signs or tongues of men, for they are quite beyond what the human intelligence can conceive; so that our description of them, compared to reality, seemed like children's play. O! I would rather weep now than speak, only that you command me on obedience to speak. O, misery of all miseries! far surpassing all thought; how horribly and unutterably are to be dreaded the torments of eternal woe! for the perpetual fire of hell lasts in the soul, which is always agitated with a fury inconceivable, always desolated with a terrific sadness, always associated with restless demons, without hope, without consolation, without any respite—only everything is seen, and heard, and felt spiritually, and not as we figure it. There are various places of purifying flame, daily some are liberated, daily others arrive, all have the certain hope of deliverance, though the hour is not known. Much availeth the suffrages made in the charity of God, and the pure fasts in the love of Christ, and the immolations of the Lord's body and blood in the church. At the moment of my presentation such a crowd of souls came from the world to be judged, that it seemed as if the whole human race had died with me: and lo! all of them save twelve heard the sentence of the reprobate! of these twelve, one was a friar of the rule of St. Francis, the other a poor beggar and leper, and these two passed straight to heaven, and the other ten had to pass first through purgatory. Lo! all that I have said is still only uttered in the way of similitudes, for I saw nothing with my carnal eyes, but remote from all senses, without a voice or any similitude, in a moment I spiritually saw and heard all. And now, lord, that I have obeyed you, and spoken, spare me and yourself from henceforth, for I will speak of it no more to you or to any one. Endeavour to lead the people to repent, and preach to them what you think useful.' From that time, Godfrid lived twelve years in such austerity of life, that no one could doubt but that he had seen greater than what he said. No one ever after saw him smile, or joyous, or sleeping or idle; no word useless or idle

ever passed his lips more; no one saw him angry, or impatient, or heard him murmur against any one, or speak evil of those by whom he was injured, and they were many: winter and summer he went barefoot, in one grey vest always clad; he never shaved his beard, he daily fasted save on Sunday, neither ate fish nor flesh nor tasted wine: injured or derided, always was he silent, and, however injured, never did he change his countenance. With the labour of his hands he supported his wife and children; he was always employed, constantly in prayer; he slept four hours at night; daily before the crucifix he knelt and gave himself stripes, seven times he repeated the Pater, and seven times kissed the earth in form of a cross; he often confessed, and daily heard mass. On feast days, he either prayed alone in his chamber with the door shut, or withdrawing into a neighbouring grove he walked alone with God. He slept on the naked

ground and had a stone for his pillow; and so lived till his death, when he was buried in the parish church before the altar of St. George.* For such a soul terror, perhaps, was the only medicine.

A similar vision was granted to Wettin, a monk of Reichenau, on Sunday the 29th of October, in the year 824. This was written down by Hetto on tablets from the mouth of Wettin. The following year Walafrid Strabo, who was of the same monastery, verified the relation in a Latin poem, and not only Germany, but the Christian world, immediately received the vision as genuine.† "Here," says a recent historian, "there is no room for incredulity. If the vision of Wettin be rejected, so may every other fact of history."

But it is time to bring this chapter to an end, and return to observe the blessed clean of heart, in their enjoyment of the sight of God.

CHAPTER XIV.



THE observation of the visible world was not the only study subservient to the ultimate object of the pure. Indeed, this was but an elementary step in their progress to the highest illumination, and even the next left them at an immeasurable distance from the clearer vision to which they subsequently attained. Having shown that the ancient Catholic society evinced an inherent antipathy to paganism, and that it possessed a philosophy complete in itself, we may naturally be called upon to account for a fact which seems to rise in contradiction to such views, and to explain upon what ground so much importance was attached to the study of the ancient philosophy. With what diligence the holy fathers had studied the writings of the ancients, has been already shown. St. Augustin spoke in terms of such admiration of the Pythagorean wisdom, that afterwards

in his retractions, he was obliged to qualify it, lest, as he says, it might be thought that he supposed Pythagoras to have erred in nothing, whereas he did in many and capital points. It is true we find a distinction sometimes made between the studies becoming youth and age. Thus Lanfranc being asked to solve certain profane questions, replied to Domnoald, "to solve these questions of secular letters, is not the business of a bishop; formerly, indeed, we spent our youthful years in such studies, but assuming the pastoral care we determined to renounce them." However, as Mabillon observes, the examples of Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and other holy bishops of the early church, will prove, that it was of immemorial usage for the holy doctors to be learned in the writings of the Gentiles.‡

* Ad an. 1321.

† Mabill. Acta, san. Ord. S. Bened. tom. v.

‡ Pref. in III, Secul. Benedic.

Such then was the fact, but the difficulty arising from it is soon removed; for to account for their fervour in studies of that kind, we have only to observe that the stores of pagan erudition imparted to their eyes, in a certain manner, the sight of God, since that ancient philosophy enabled them to confirm religion by the testimony of human reason, and to behold divine truth in the great original traditions of the human race. In the middle ages it is true the study of heathen philosophy seemed less necessary than in primitive times; for, even in the fifth century, the pagan superstition was so fallen, that some Christian writers thought it useless to argue any longer against it, but others, amongst whom appeared the monk Evagrus, maintained that it was still highly important to treat on it, in the way of contrast with the holiness and simplicity of our religion.*

Touron says, "that St. Thomas studied the pagan philosophers, in order to refute those weak minds, which thought a thing might be true according to faith, and not true according to the philosophers; and that he only sought to show that even these philosophers confirmed faith, since of truth might be said, 'tuum erat ubicumque erat.'" Plato, that sweet and wondrous stranger, as a French Theologian styles him, was introduced into the Christian school, as a witness the most renowned and admirable of the ancient philosophy; Aristotle was found useful, because all that had been saved from the wreck of human science was contained in his books, and he had treated on most subjects of thought with method and perspicuity. The Christian schools, therefore, laid hold of the Stagyrte, as after the deluge one would have taken possession of whatever monuments had escaped the waters. "It is well to collect every thing good," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "from the Greeks and Barbarians."† Such, too, was the maxim of the middle ages. "If it should happen sometimes," says Alanus de Insulis, "that you are transferred from the books of theology to those of the earthly philosophy, you should look at them in passing, and observe whether you cannot find something to edify manners, which is agreeable to the Catholic faith, that the Hebrews may be enriched with the spoils of Egypt, that gold from the Egyptians may be applied to the construction of the tabernacle, and wood to the building of the

temple." "Sic tamen transire debemus," he adds, "in aliena castra, ut simus exploratores et peregrini, non incolæ."*

Hugo of St. Victor, on the same ground, accepts the service of the heathen writers. "How many monuments of excellent genius," saith he, "have they left, where the secrets of nature and occult properties of things are investigated! We read of arts, and study, and discipline, and many precepts of reason, which they discovered with the faculties given to them, and transmitted in writings to their posterity—logic, ethics, mathematics, physics, on the form of reasoning, and of life and manners, on the disposition and order, and causes, and progress of all things; and they were able on this side to apprehend truth, because, by them, who were not the children of life, was to be administered that truth which was not to life. Therefore, was it given to them for our sakes, for whom the consummation was reserved, that they should find that truth which it was necessary the children of life should receive for the service of the highest truth."‡

The inconstancy respecting the reception or rejection of the books of the Stagyrte, in the university of Paris, concerning which Lannois wrote a book, entitled on the Various Fortunes of Aristotle, only shows the unwillingness of that body to admit the study of philosophy, as forming a distinct faculty from that of arts.§ His fate had been settled from the first; since, as St. Thomas observes, "faith had for ever determined the metaphysical question; but as a logician, it was clear he might be received, and those who merely employed him for that purpose were never reprobated."¶ It was in this latter capacity that his writings exercised such an influence during the middle ages, and, besides, as Staudenmaier remarks, "he was regarded as an authority, for having shown that every science rests upon three things, on principles, definitions, and demonstrations, or syllogism."|| The same observation was made by Francis Picus of Mirandula, in his work on the Study of Divine and Human Philosophy, in which he shows the utility that may be drawn to the Church from the study of the Gentile

* Alani de Ins. Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 36.

† Hug. St. Vict. Comment. in Coelest. Dion. Hierarch. Lib. i. c. 1.

‡ Keuffel Hist. Schol.

§ Berthier, Discours sur les Etudes aux Siècles, XII. XIII. XIV. and XV.

|| John Scot, &c. 463.

* Ap. Dacher. Spicilieg. tom. x. 3.

† Stromat. Lib. l. 9.

writers. "Alluding to its love for Aristotle," he says, "nor does the theology of the university of Paris seem to me to be any thing but a certain mixture of divine doctrines, developed or confirmed by natural reasons; a beautiful and honourable mode of combating the adversary, using thus his own weapons to conquer him. For it is an admirable thing to show to the impious, that the nature itself which they say they follow demonstrates to us that we should acknowledge and honour the Creator casting off all superstitions, while nourishing and holding fast the true religion."*

Already, therefore, we can perceive how the study of the ancient philosophy was made by the clean of heart subservient to the purposes of that vision, in which their eternal happiness was to consist. But another manner of pursuing those studies, still more conducive to the same end, consisted in the exercise of discovering from them the great original traditions of the human race, which perpetuated in some degree the remembrances of the first divine revelation. It is remarkable that the wisest of the ancient philosophers themselves recognised this object as the most important of all in philosophic pursuits. Pindar constantly appeals for his authority to the old traditions of men.† Socrates ascribes to them all that he knows: "it is clear to me," he says, "that I must have heard this from some of the ancients, for that I have not known it from myself I am convinced, being assured of my own ignorance. It must have been poured into me as if from a vessel, though I have forgotten how and by whom."‡ "Let us advance in this discourse," says Critias, "invoking above all the Gods Memory, since to her we must trust for the greatest things, and the whole of this argument, for it is by remembering and recording the things which were delivered by the priests, and which were transmitted to us by Solon, that we shall fulfil what is now required of us."§ Plato even thinks that men are preserved from the greatest crimes by the influence of such traditions, conveyed by general language and by poets. All his provision for the virtue of a state is in prescribing that the government should take energetic measures to preserve uncorrupted the ancient maxims and traditional wisdom of men, so that neither

poets nor actors in theatres, should ever dare to contradict them.*

Cicero, in arguing to prove the immortality of the soul, speaks of the necessity in the first instance of searching into the doctrines of antiquity, of those ancients whom Ennius calls *Cascos*, who all held that the soul was immortal; and he appeals also to the pontifical law and ceremonies, which rest upon the same conclusion. He believes souls to be immortal, on the ground that all nations agreed in believing it; "for whatever they held with one consent, is to be considered," he says, "the law of nature."† He pays no regard to what single voices may utter, but to what is perpetual and constant.‡

"Above all things," Quintilian says, "it is proper to know and keep ever in mind the sayings and deeds of the ancients;" and, indeed, "though," as St. Clement of Alexandria says, "the self-conceit of the Greeks proclaimed certain men to be masters," and though Aristotle says, "that the first philosophy on all points did but lisp like a child,"§ it would have puzzled them to point out any eminent sage who did not owe his most important knowledge to a primitive universal tradition. The most ancient philosophers known, Zoroaster, Confucius, Thales, and Pythagoras, did not appear earlier than five or six hundred years before Christ, and certainly they conferred no light which had not before them been imparted by those sublime traditions concerning God and the creation of the world, which existed among the ancient Etrurians,|| and in all other parts of the world, as was observed by the holy fathers, who collected so many of them in their writings,¶ deducing them from those Hebrews, who alone, according to an ancient oracle, possessed wisdom.

Many of the fathers, and especially the Greek, considered philosophy and religion as having emanated from one common source. Justin Martyr thought that the former was an internal revelation, by the λόγος,** Clemens and others, that it had been borrowed from the Jewish Scriptures.† St. Augustin, that it was an oral tradition.‡ Tertullian, however, says, "that there are

* Joan. F. Picus Mirand. de Studio Divine et Hum. Philosophiæ, Lib. i. 3.

† Olymp. vii.

‡ Plato, Phædrus.

§ Critias.

* De Legibus, Lib. viii.

† Tuscul. Lib. i.

‡ V. 10.

§ Metaphys. Lib. i. c. 4.

|| Seneca Quæst. Nat. ii. 45. Suidas in Voce Tyrrena.

¶ Clem. Alex. Protrept. vi. Stromat. v. 14. vi. c. 6.

** Apol. ii. 50.

‡ Strom. i. vi. 5.

‡ De Civit. Dei, viii. 2.

many noble and beautiful passages in the writings of the Gentile philosophers which were suggested to them as if by natural light and common sense.* "Although the Greek philosophy," says St. Clement, "does not attain the fulness of truth, still it prepares the way to the most kingly discipline, in a certain manner inspiring temperance, and typifying, as it were in bas relief, the manner of studying truth."† In another place he says, "The Greek philosophy is like a torch, which men light when the sun goes down. But when the word arose, the holy light shone forth, and the torch was useless."‡ "Paul, in his Epistles," he continues, "does not seem to condemn philosophy, but only him, who having attained to the true gnostic height, should afterwards recede again to the Greek philosophy, the rudiments of the world, which served but as a preliminary instruction to truth. The wisdom of this world, which he condemns, is the wisdom of loving pleasure—loving itself, which teaches nothing but the things of this world."§ They who say that philosophy comes from the devil, should remember what the Scripture saith, "that the devil transformeth himself into an angel of light." What doing? clearly prophesying. But if he prophesy as an angel of light, then he must speak truth. If he speak angelic and luminous things, then these are useful things. But in a Catholic sense all things necessary and useful to life come to us from God, and philosophy was as a domestic testament to the Greeks, to prepare them for truth.|| "Accordingly," he observes of these philosophers, "not a few are now passed to truth."¶ St. Jerome, in his catalogue, mentions that many of the early Christian writers preserved even their garb of philosophers. "We need not, therefore, foolishly stop our ears against the Greek philosophy," concludes St. Clement, as if against syrens, "supposing that we can never return if we but hear it, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; but waiting awhile, and taking from it what may be useful, we should then depart home to the true philosophy."**

St. Irenæus says, "it was necessary that truth should receive the testimony of all, that it should be a judgment of salvation to those who believed, and of condem-

nation to the incredulous, in order that all might be judged with justice."* In the Gentile philosophy, therefore, he sees a testimony to the Father and to the Son before he was born of Mary. The ancient fathers discerned in Pythagoras and Plato the philosophy of the holy Scriptures.† Tertullian, speaking of the philosophy of Seneca, styles him Seneca sæpe noster.‡ "Take the Greek books," says St. Clement of Alexandria, "and read the Sibyl, and see how clearly is taught one God. Read Hystapes, and you will find the history of the Son of God predicted."§ Lactantius inserted in his work the prophecies of the Erythræan or Cumæan Sibyl, reckoning her among those who must pertain to the city of God; and St. Augustin shows, that there were many Gentiles who predicted Christ.|| The latter, indeed, proves, that what is called the Christian religion existed from the beginning of the human race.¶ St. Prosper says, that the ancient just were already Christians, because they lived in the faith which was to be revealed; ** and St. Agobard says, that we believe not only all the holy patriarchs but many of the Gentiles to have been anointed with an invisible chrism, and made members of Christ.†† This opinion was taught by all the ancient doctors of the Church,‡‡ and commentated upon by all the scholastic theologians.§§ Hugo of St. Victor expressly says, "the Gentile philosophers do not seem to have attained to the knowledge of the unity and trinity of God without the assistance of grace."||| It was in consequence of discerning so much of the eternal wisdom in the works of the ancients, that the schoolmen attached so much import-

* Adv. Hær. Lib. iv. c. 14.

† S. Clem. Alex. Admon. ad Gentes. Tertull. Apolog. 8. Cyril. Alexand. Cont. Jul. i. Theodoret, Serm. i. ad Græc. Euseb. Lib. xi. xiii. S. Ambros. in Ps. cxviii.

‡ De Anima, 20.

§ Stromat. vi. 6.

|| De Civ. Dei, xviii. 23, 47.

¶ St. August. Retract. Lib. i. c. 13. n. 3.

** In Ps. civ.

†† S. Agobard, Lib. adv. Fredegisum, 20.

‡‡ St. Epiph. Hæres. 66. Euseb. Hist. i. c. 4. Origen in Epist. ad Rom. Lib. ii. c. 3. S. Cyprian, Epist. 73. S. Hilar. de Trinitat. Lib. v. S. Jerome, Lib. Comen. in Epist. ad Galat. c. 2. Theodoret in Epist. ad Rom. S. Fulgence, Lib. de Incarn. c. 17. S. Gregor. the Great in Ezechiel, Lib. ii. hom. 17. S. Augustin, Epist. 157. ad Optat. et Lib. ix. cont. Faust.

§§ Vide S. Thomas, S.S. quæst. ii. art. 7. Hugues de St. Victor, Lib. i. de Sacr. part 10. c. 4. the Master of the Sentences in iii. distinct. 10. who cites others; and Suarez de Fide, disp. 11. § 6.

||| Quæst. circ. Epist. ad Rom.

* De Anima.

† Stromat. i. 16.

‡ Id. v. 5.

§ Id. vi. 8.

|| Id. v. 8.

¶ VI. 18.

** VI. ii.

ance to them ; and it should be observed, that the Catholic philosophers of a later age, who followed in their footsteps, ascribed their affection for them to the same cause ; they saw God in all things. " I have studied the cabalistic books of the Hebrews with great labour," says John Picus of Mirandula, " books which the Jews will not permit any one under forty years of age to touch. I call God to witness that I have seen in them not so much the Mosaic as the Christian religion. There I have found the mystery of the Trinity, the incarnation of the Word, the divinity of the Messiah, original sin, the expiation of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem, the fall of the demons, purgatory, and hell. As for the Pythagorean philosophy, hear only Plato, whose decrees are so like the Christian faith, that our Augustin returned immense thanks to God for having placed in his hand the books of the Platonicians."* So then, whether we consider the study of the heathen philosophy by the holy fathers, by the schoolmen, or by the later Catholic philosophers, who sought to revive a more decided taste for that ancient literature, we find that, during ages of faith, it was always conducted in a purely Christian spirit and subserviency to the great aim of magnifying and beholding God. It has been remarked, indeed, by modern philosophers, that the main object of Charlemagne, as that of the middle ages generally, in promoting classical learning, was neither more nor less than the propagation of the Christian religion.† Accordingly we find, that there was not then that exclusive study of the ancient and modern writers in succession only and rarely, or never together, or with light reciprocally reflected ; which, as a distinguished scholar complains, is all that can be found at present. Nor was the result of classical study the pedantic useless erudition of those condemned by Malebranche, who quote an infinity of authors to show what certain men believed that Aristotle believed respecting the soul's immortality ; but it was a deep and holy joy to behold the consent of all nations and the anticipated testimony of human reason to the truths announced by our Redeemer. In this manner God, being thus made visible to them in works of ancient philosophy, the rest was matter of indifference ; and Richard of St. Victor, the great glory

of the school, boasts that it was so, citing with enthusiasm the words of Jerome, " nor doth it matter what saith Aristotle, but what saith Paul."* With respect to the relative merit of the ancient sages, they of course had their opinion. St. Augustin,† and almost all the holy fathers, prefer Plato to the Stagyrte. St. Thomas remarks, that in many things which pertain to philosophy, Augustin uses the opinions of Plato, not affirming but reciting.‡ The schoolmen, too, esteemed Plato in consideration of his piety, of his depth, and of that general conformity of his thoughts with the noblest sentiments of nature, which made a later philosopher remark, that on many points he was a Platonician before he knew there had ever been a Plato in the world. Hence that Platonic savour which so much delighted Marsilius Ficinus, in the writings of Henry of Ghent and of Duns Scotus.§ St. Thomas, indeed, makes more use of Aristotle, but he only preferred him in his capacity of logician. For neither, however, was there, during the middle ages, that exclusive admiration and reverence with which modern historians pretend they were regarded. Melchior Canus shows on how many points Aristotle erred against the truth of the Scriptures, for he erred in his Treatise on Dreams, denying that God ever sends a dream, in his Treatise on Good Fortune, where he argues against a Providence, from the visible disorder in the moral world, in his book *De Cælo*, where he would lead us to conclude that the rational soul was either obnoxious to corruption, or that it was eternal and uncreated, in the fifth and twelfth books of his *Metaphysics*, where he defines God to be a perpetual and the best animal, and again, at another time, where he calls him a mind, or the heaven itself, in the same book, where he ascribes an infinite virtue to intellectual substances, and again, when he seems to stigmatise, as fables to restrain the vulgar, and promote the utility of civil life, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and where he teaches that God disdains to occupy himself about the insignificant affairs of men.|| True, as Staudenmaier observes, Catholicism would embrace and possess all things in one. This is what gives Christianity that universal character by which it is so distinguished,

* Ric. S. Vict. Sermo in die Pasch.

† De Civ. Dei, x. i.

‡ LXXXVII. art. 5.

§ Mars. Fic. Epist. Lib. ix.

|| De Locis Theologicis, Lib. x. cap. v.

* De Hominum Dignitate.

† Geschichte der Class. Litterat. im Mittelalter. 127.

for true genius appears only in totality of genius. It was no accommodation of Plato and Aristotle, still less a slavish reliance on either, when the theologians of the middle age had regard to them; but it was only that love, that impulse, that spiritual necessity to view genius as one. Hence it was that they employed Aristotle to explain their scholastic points, but without suffering the old philosophy to enter into any part of the base of their structures: it is clear that the scholastics decided with freedom for themselves what views were most just, and that they did not follow blindly the opinion of any philosopher. In general, it is evident, that they did not hold to any decision of Aristotle or Plato, but that they received them with various modifications, and came to adopt, at length, through necessity, as the clear product of their own reflection a middle age philosophy. In fact, we find in the scholastics the greatest originality, and the utmost riches of thought.* If we turn to the Catholic philosophers of a later age, who were most distinguished for an enthusiastic attachment to the ancient philosophy, we shall find that the study of pagan writers had never tainted the purity or cooled the fervour of their faith. If they would say, with the Count de Maistre, "Let us never leave a great question without having first heard Plato," they do not leave us to doubt whether they concluded with the Gospel. Marsilius Ficinus, who obtained so eminently the title of Platonist, says himself, that he has only followed the example of Augustin, and other most holy men, in respecting Plato, and in delaying in the Academy, in order to show the concord of Moses and Plato, and how the Christian dogmas are confirmed by the Socratic.†

In his letter to Picus of Mirandula, he says, "that all his desire in studying the Platonic philosophy, is to make men Christians."‡ All the desire of Ambrosius Traversari, in translating the work of Diogenes Laertius, is to show that the more we study the heathen philosophy, the more we must admire the Christian religion. Alas! how different from the language of the scholars of a later period, who, like Heinsius and Scaliger, reserved all their eloquence for pompous orations in praise of the Stoical philosophy—all their

zeal for reprobating "the hive of Loiolites,"—all their enthusiasm for admiring Casaubon's divine castigations on Athenæus! "Tuæ divinæ in Athenæum castigationes adeo me rapiunt," says the latter, "ut quam in illas incidi, ægre me ab illis revocari patiar." "There is no writer who has taught me so many or such great things as you in that divine work."*

Indeed, the scholars of this reformed school seemed to avow that the state of things around them, which they so greatly admired, was only a return to that of the heathen world. "In the writers even of the eighth century," says one of these, "we meet with a reminiscence of the ancient philosophy, which seems an anticipation of our modern humanity. Eginhard thinks and speaks like the most virtuous man of an enlightened age: by studying the monuments of the fine Roman civilization, he had divined our own."† What would that poor Ratherius, in the tenth century, who was counted, we are told, as the first amongst the Palatine philosophers, have thought of such a criterion to judge of the progress of philosophy?

What would he have thought on hearing men affirm with Heeren, that the study of heathen literature might contribute to a salutary reform of the Church, and after sixteen centuries, place theology for the first time on its true basis,‡ or with an English author of genius, that they lamented the ancient idolatry! "I visited the Pantheon," says a modern traveller, "and entered with a reverence approaching to superstition. I closed my eyes, and tried to persuade myself the pagan gods were in their niches, and the saints out of the question; I was vexed at coming to my senses and finding them all there—St. Andrew with his cross, and St. Agnes with her lamb; then I paced disconsolately into the portico." Where could a parallel be found to such a passage throughout the whole literature of sixteen centuries? Certainly, it is not from Catholic scholars that a descent can be traced by these men, who, with the same breath, attempt to prove the heathenism of the ancient Catholic state, and to complete their consistency, perhaps, are building heathen temples, as in Hanover, and placing upon them such an inscription as that which may be found there, "Genio Leibnitzii." The Catholic church

* Johan. Scotus und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit. i. 444.
† Epist. Lib. vii. & viii.
‡ Id. Lib. xi. § Heinsii Orat. xxiv.

* Jos. Scal. Epist. Lib. i. 58, 59.
† Villemain, Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age, i.
‡ Gesch. d. Class. Lit. im. Mittelalt. ii. 350.

would never lend her sanction, though only by silence, to such a spirit. She sent her scholars to behold God in the ancient monuments of human genius, but not to rebuild paganism with their ruins.

Marsilius Ficinus acknowledges, indeed, with gratitude, that if the books of Plato had not caused him to fall into some heresy, he owed his escape to the care of St. Antoninus, archbishop of Florence, for the vigilant pastor seeing the incredible ardour of the young canon for the works of this philosopher, feared that the beauty of the language might lead them astray, and therefore engaged him to suspend that reading until he had first studied the four books of St. Thomas against the Gentiles. The sermons of Savonarola, at which he was an assiduous assistant, completed the extirpation of any latent pride resulting from his love of the Platonic writings, which was contrary to the resolve of glorying alone in being a Christian.* The necessity for caution, indeed, was well observed all through the ages of faith

Hence, Francis Picus of Mirandula remarks, that all Christians ought not to consult the books of the Gentiles, "for some," he says, "are so imbecile and infirm, that when they find them contradicting faith, they will hesitate; and others who guide souls to the heavenly Jerusalem cannot find time to study them."† But when minds were truly enlightened, to glory in such studies was the same as to glory in the Cross. Some condemned his illustrious uncle John Picus of Mirandula for his assiduous study of the ancients, objecting to all philosophy, on the ground that Adam, on account of science, was ejected from paradise, and that it is extirpated by the example of Christ. But how magnificent was the reply of that admirable young man the pride and ornament of his age, whose name the greatest of his contemporaries pronounced with an enthusiasm, which, perhaps, was never paralleled. "Let them permit me, who am a Christian born, of Christian parents, who bear the sign of Christ on my forehead, to exclaim with Paul, I am not a Jew, not an Ishmaelite, not a heretic; but I worship Jesus Christ, and I bear the cross of Jesus in my body, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I to the world."‡

"I found in my late sickness," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Francis Marescal-

cho of Ferrara, "that human writings confer nearly nothing, and that the works of Christ console more than the words of all the philosophers." To a similar conclusion we find many coming in the middle ages, who, like Hugo Metellus, writing to St. Bernard, took a pride in styling themselves "the late domestics of Aristotle, now the servants of Christ." Truly in these illustrious lovers of wisdom, was seen verified the prediction of the holy fathers and the schoolmen, that to the pure all things are pure, and that even the philosophy of the Gentiles can reveal God. Francis of Mirandula says, "that his uncle John Picus had such an ardent love for God, that once when they were walking together in a certain orchard at Ferrara, talking on the love of Christ," he said to him in conclusion, "I will disclose a secret which is for your ear alone. As soon as I shall have finished my incubations, I am resolved to give all that I possess to the poor, and armed with a crucifix barefooted I will go through towns and cities and castles preaching Christ." "I heard afterwards," adds the nephew, "that he had resolved on entering the order of St. Dominick."* The great and learned men, who in ages of faith had Plato and Aristotle on their tongues, had no less Christ enshrined within their hearts, to receive adoration there, and undivided love and glory. The Catholic scholars of the sixteenth century united the graces of the ancient literature with the simplicity and piety of the Christian. Like Picus of Mirandula, they might be heard saying, a cock to Æsculapius the physician, at our death, which is the true recovery,† showing how well they had understood Plato, without leading any one to suspect that they did not die as monks or hermits die.

Hermolaus Barbarus describes the last moments of Zachariah, the legate at Venice, as follows:—"Such was his constancy that he did not once indicate the least possible sign of grief, so intrepid that he seemed about to move not from life, but only from one house to another. During three days continually he spoke or heard others speak of God, of religion, of the immortality of the soul. The extreme sacraments he not only did not defer receiving, but of his own accord he demanded them. All the senses of his mind and body, in which few men surpassed him, he preserved to the last. Nay, at the last he showed himself more

* Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 23.

† De Studio Divin. et Hum. Philos. Lib. i. c. 5.

‡ Apologia.

* Vita ejus.

† De Hominum Dignitate.

subtle than he ever did before. He had two little images, one of Christ, and the other of the blessed Virgin, which he kept pressed to his breast, and he expired kissing them. It is inexpressible the consolation derived from witnessing such a kind

—do not say of death, but of glorious resurrection, to a better life." But we must proceed to consider the other studies which imparted a vision of God to the clean of heart.

CHAPTER XV.



HE holy Scriptures, in ages when they were understood as the church interprets them, and in ages when it was thought that every reader might interpret them according to his own judgment, have exercised a very different influence upon the human character, and led to results of a very dissimilar nature in the history of mankind. At the effects caused by their diffusion during the latter period we can but occasionally glance, since they do not form part of the subject of this history. On others may devolve the task of surveying wars and disputations, and murders, which were deemed acceptable to heaven, and men who sought and found themselves in the inspired books. Our path leads us to survey the beauty of a peaceful paradise, the order and wisdom of a celestial world, and the felicity of men, who in the Scriptures, as in the book of nature, and as in the primeval records of the world, sought and beheld God. Jesus Christ wrote nothing, and it does not appear in what is written that he gave orders to his Apostles to write. There was no ground from earlier revelations to suppose that the divine light preparing for the world was to be diffused by writing; for, on the contrary, God had said by the mouth of Jeremiah, "I will write my law in their souls, and I will engrave it in their hearts." "Hence," the holy fathers say, "that the church might have dispensed with Scripture, if Christians had remained in charity and truth." "Thus," St. Chrysostom says, "our life ought to be so pure, that we should have no need of the assistance of holy Scripture, and grace alone serving us in place of all books, the law of God would be written in our heart, not with ink, but by the impres-

sion of the Holy Spirit. God has sufficiently shown us by what he has said and done, how much more happy this first state would have been than the latter. For, he spoke to Noah, to Abraham, and to his descendants, to Job, and to Moses not by characters and letters, but immediately by himself. In the New Testament God has retraced the conduct which he had observed in the Old, and treated the Apostles as he had treated the Patriarchs. Jesus Christ has left them nothing in writing, but instead of books, the grace of the Holy Spirit. "A man, therefore," says St. Augustin, "supported by faith, hope, and charity, and retaining them unimpaired, has no need of the Scriptures, unless in order to instruct others."* Experience proves this, for St. Irenæus testifies, that many lived by these three in solitude, without books. "Whence," he adds, "I think is fulfilled in them what is said, *sive prophetiæ evacuabuntur, sive linguæ cessabunt, sive scientia destruetur.*" In the symbols of the Apostles and of Nice, after the words *Spiritus Sanctum* follows immediately the holy Catholic Church, without any mention of the Scriptures, since men were not to believe in the Church, from believing in them, as modern philosophers suppose, but, as St. Augustin says "to believe the Scriptures, because the Church presented them."

Paul the Apostle in many places of his letters, says, "the Church is the body of Christ, and Christ the head of the Church." "Therefore," continues Louis of Blois, "he who rebels against the Church, rebels against Christ. *Si contemnitur Ecclesia, contemnitur et Christus.*" There is but one voice

* De Doct. Christ. lib. i. c. 39.

of the body and head ; and the precepts of the Church are the precepts of Christ, although not expressed in the sacred Scriptures : for the authority of the Church does not depend upon the testimony of the Scriptures, but rather the authority of the Scriptures depends upon the approbation of the Church ; for who would know that the Scriptures which we venerate were divine, unless the Church received them ? The Holy Gospels, the Epistles, and Acts of the Apostles, were written many years after the ascension of Christ into heaven. Had the Church then no authority of making statutes, because what she might ordain was not expressed in the Scriptures ? Were not men bound to believe and obey the Church, then teaching without the Scriptures of the New Testament ? *

Such continued to be the convictions of men, and such predictions continued to be verified during sixteen centuries. "The simpler sort of people," says Louis of Blois, "who are men of goodwill, fulfil the law ; that is, they love God and their neighbour, although they may not read those divine Scriptures, many places of which are difficult to be understood." † Nevertheless, the abuse of sacred Scripture began in very early times, so that St. Augustin recapitulates the accumulated evidence of preceding ages, saying, "heresy springs from no other source but from good Scripture ill-understood and boldly maintained." ‡ Tertullian had concluded his great work against heresy with these words, "thus have we brought to an end the question between us and heretics of every description, by certain just and necessary prescriptions, drawing them away from that collation of the Scriptures to which they invite us. "With discussions from Scripture," he says elsewhere, "they fatigue the firm, capture the weak, and leave those that are between with scruples." § Not to consult Scripture, therefore, are men to be challenged, nor is the combat to be in them, where there is to be no victory, or a very uncertain victory, or what amounts to the same. Nor do I fear to say, that the Scriptures themselves are so disposed by the will of God, that they should minister materials to heretics, since I read that heresies must of necessity come, which, without the Scriptures could not be. ||

In fact, when the heretics refer us to the Scriptures, we can answer, what need to

refer to Scripture, since, without its assistance, we can prove to God, that you have no right to the Scripture ? The Church may say to them, who are you ? Whence did you come ? You Marcius, what right have you to work a mine which belongs to me ? "I had a source whose waters were of the greatest beauty : " say Valentin, "who has given you leave to come and trouble it ? All this is my inheritance ; you are strangers, why do you pretend to sow my land, and to feed your flocks upon my pastures ? It is my heritage—I possess it since a long time—I possessed it before you—I have the titles which have been transmitted to me, by those to whom it belonged. I am the heir of the apostles—I hold it conformably to their testament—I execute what they have committed to my faith : nothing shall make me depart from this rule of conduct ; but as for you, they have disinherited you ; they have rejected you as strangers and as enemies." *

The gnostic heretics, by whom such a flood of fantastic errors was let loose in the first ages, were of all men of that period the most assiduous readers of Scripture, and the most laborious in quest of texts to suit their purposes. And, if we pursued history farther, we should find that at no epoch were there wanting men to fabricate arms of iniquity from the words of truth—a fact remarked even by poets, saying,

"——— In religion

What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ? "

The holy Scriptures, as we shall soon observe more fully, were regarded in ages of faith as that tower of David spoken of in the book of Canticles, hung round with shields for all who combated in the cause of God and his Church. "Sicut turris David—mille clypei pendent ex ea, omnis armatura fortium." † But though intended for all, it was known that there might be times and circumstances when the pastors of the Church would find it for the good of men's souls, to supply them with the word of God exclusively, in the way of preaching, and of spiritual books of instruction. The fathers, who have so forcibly recommended the reading of the Scriptures, did not deem it right to put all its books indifferently into the hands of the faithful. St. Basil, in his letter to Chilon his disciple, warns him

* Ludovic. Blosius Epist. ad Florentium.

† Ludov. Blos. Collyr. Hæreticorum, Lib. i. c. 3.

‡ Ap. xv.

§ Tract. in Joan. xviii.

|| De Præscript.

* Tertullian de Præscript. xxxvii.

† Cant. 4.

against the danger of reading the Old Testament amiss. "Do not neglect reading," he says, "principally that of the New Testament; that of the Old may sometimes have inconveniency. I do not mean to say that the things written in it are not good, but they may cause trouble in the mind, and wound it in consequence of the weakness of those who allow themselves to be wounded. Bread is proper for nourishment, yet it is hurtful to the sick."*

"St. Jerome would not allow the book of Canticles to be read till a mature period of life," and he says elsewhere, "that the beginning and the conclusion of the prophecy of Ezechiel were so obscure that the Jews used to forbid their being read by all under thirty years of age, and that they extended the same prohibition to the commencement of Genesis."† If we read St. Jerome's fiftieth Epistle to Paulinus, we shall find how that holy and learned man esteemed the study of the Scripture deep and difficult, and requiring a surer guide than merely a good intention. The mystic and scholastic theologians of the middle age were impressed with the same conviction. The profound and multitudinous knowledge which is required for a thorough understanding of the holy Scriptures, is shown with great judgment by Raban Maur.‡ And, in fact, all sciences and arts were then chiefly cultivated, with a view to elucidate them. Honorius of Autun, in his encyclopædical work, *De Animæ Exilio et Patria*, represents the soul as a pilgrim—wandering in exile, that is, in ignorance, through ten different states, which are the sciences of the trivium and quadrivium, physics, mechanics, and æconomics, to its true country, which is the holy Scripture.

Richard of St. Victor remarks that, "the Scripture often says one thing and means another."§ "Many places of Scripture," saith he, "have a vain and perverse sound in relation to history, which yet discussed mystically, speak what is right according to spiritual intelligence."|| St. Augustin had said, "that it is with the prophetic books as with harps, in which not all parts give sound, but only the cords."¶ Thomas Haselbach, of Vienna, spent twenty-two years in explaining the first chapter of

Isaiah, as Ceneas Sylvius relates.* Yet, erudition was far from being considered as the most important qualification. "A learned exposition of the holy Scriptures," as Frederick Schlegel observes, "most certainly requires and presupposes a philosophic spirit, but it is not itself philosophy,"† still less was it considered synonymous with religion. According to Catholic theologians, simple reasonings upon texts of the Bible, however solid, do never constitute the faith of any doctrine. In early times many knew the Scriptures by heart, without being considered as having made a greater proficiency in truth. "There are some," says St. Augustin, "who read them, and neglect them; they read that they may retain them; they neglect lest they should understand: to whom are to be preferred greatly, without doubt, those who retain the words less, and see their substance with the eyes of their heart."‡ "In later ages," Frederick Schlegel remarks, "that the study of the Bible has not prevented the northern Germans from adopting the system of rationalism," founded upon the idea of the Bible itself being also progressive, and certainly never has it been proved to conduce of necessity to the nourishment of the interior life. This result of experience explains many things.

When a certain young person came to offer herself to be received into one of St. Theresa's convents, and said that she must have permission to bring her Bible with her, we read that this holy mother and truly profound lover of wisdom, who in a pure heart was blessed with so clear a view of God on earth, replied immediately, "O, then you are not for us! We are poor ignorant sisters, who can only spin and sew. You would do much better to go elsewhere with your Bible." It is evident that the saint perceived, by her manner, that she was vain and fond of disputation. Not by such persons did the inhabitants of cloisters, in the middle ages, require to be taught reverence for the Scriptures. We read, in the annals of the Minors, that it was remarked by the senior monks of the monastery of St. Mary of the Angels at Florence, that brother Silvester, when the gospel was read, used to change his place and fall into the rear, in order to prevent any one from observing his tears and rapture at hearing the divine word.§

* S. Basil, Letter to Chilon, his disciple.

† S. Hieron. Lib. ii. Ep. 1. ad Paulinum Presbyterum.

‡ Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, Lib. iii. c. 8.

§ De Eruditione Hom. Inter. P. i. Lib. i.

|| Id. 1. Lib. ii. 9. ¶ De Civ. Dei, xvi.

* Epist. Lib. i. 165.

† Philosophie der Sprache, 249.

‡ De Doct. Christ. Lib. iv. c. 5.

§ Wad. Annal. Min. tom. v. Lib. xlviii.

Undoubtedly, the believing men of yore were far from recommending the study of the Bible, exclusive and unconnected with other discipline, as a sole sufficient way of spiritual progress. "O how glorious is it," exclaims Alanus de Insulis, "to read, how fruitful is it to study, with intense fervour, the Scriptures—to inquire into the mind of God, to investigate his instructions! but every one ought to read in a triple book—in his book of creatures, that he may find God, in the book of conscience, that he may know himself, and in the books of Scripture, that he may love his neighbour."*

Another indispensable obligation of the pastors of the church, relative to the study of the holy Scriptures, was to prevent the possibility of the people being deceived and led into error by means of false or unworthy translations of the sacred text. In transcribing the Scriptures, the Jews are so careful, that if any copy should be found deficient in a single letter, or with a single letter too much, or with a fault in one letter, it is burnt or otherwise destroyed: and was the church to be condemned for regarding with execration wilful alterations of the text, in order to establish certain opinions by means of them? From time to time new versions of the Scripture were proposed by men like Berenger, of whom Guilmundus says, that he chose rather under the admiration of men to be a heretic, than to live a Catholic without exciting notice under the eyes of God. Against these, simply to relate the conduct and language of the church, is to refute the accusations of her adversaries. Pope Innocent III., after mentioning that certain societies of men and women in the diocese of Metz had lately translated into French the gospels and epistles of St. Paul, as well as other books of holy Scripture, and adding that he wishes they had done so prudently as well as readily, concludes in these terms:—"But, although the desire of understanding the divine Scriptures, and the study of exhortation according to them, so far from being a subject for censure, is deserving of praise, yet they appear to merit being reproved on this account—that being persons of such a description, they celebrate their occult conventicles, usurp to themselves the office of preaching, elude the simplicity of the priests, and despise the society of all those who do not adhere to themselves." To the bishop and chapter of Metz he writes, therefore, saying, "Be solicitous to investigate who was really the

author of this translation, what was the intention of the translator, what is the faith of those who use it, what is the cause of their teaching, whether they venerate the apostolic see and the Catholic church, in order that we may be able to understand better what to determine."*

When we read that the holy Gregory VII., in the eleventh century, forbade the King of Bohemia to make a translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue of that country, through fear lest the sacred truth should be exposed to rash interpretations—or when we observe the distrust of the Gallican church, in the sixteenth century, with respect to new versions and the use of them by the people,†—we must refer, for a solution of the difficulty, to the circumstances which made such caution necessary; which cannot be known at present without studying the literary and religious history of the country at the time—an inquiry which Protestants need not disdain to institute, for their own writers have repeatedly acknowledged the danger. "Considering with myself," says Fuller, "the causes of the growth and increase of impiety and profaneness in our land, amongst others this seemeth to me not the least, viz., the late many false and erroneous impressions of the Bible;" to the rash study of which Hey, another of their divines, attributed the civil wars.

That just and accurate versions of the holy Scripture were studiously withheld from the people in the middle ages, is a modern error which has been so often exposed, and which, indeed, is so utterly irreconcilable with all the historical facts produced in the course of these books, that any consideration of it here would be superfluous. In proportion as the modern languages began to supersede the Latin, we find the zeal of holy men directed to the end of supplying versions of the Scripture. It was Hedwige, the saintly young queen of Poland, an assiduous reader of the Scriptures, so devoted to the propagation of the Catholic faith that she consented to marry one most odious to her, when assured that such an alliance would greatly promote it, who caused to be made, in 1390, the first translation of the Scriptures into the Polish tongue. It was James de Voragine, archbishop of Genoa in the thirteenth century, compiler of the golden legend, who translated the whole

* Inn. III. Epist. Lib. ii. 141, 142.

† Berthier, Discours sur l'Ecrit. Sainte, Hist. tom. xviii.

* Alani de Ins. Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 36.

Bible into Italian.* Again, in 1471, it is Nicolas Malermius, a Camaldolese monk of St. Matthias de Muriano at Venice, who gives a new literal translation of the whole Bible into the vulgar Italian, under the title of *Biblia Volgare Historiata*.† The old French versions, by Guiars des Moulins, Raoul de Presles, and others, were in every library; ‡ and the whole Bible was translated into French in the reign of King Charles V.; and long before the invention of printing, versions of it were given in most of the European languages. Before the Lutheran revolution, several editions had been printed in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, and Bohemia. Although many German translations from the Vulgate had before been printed, yet in 1534 we find the project of a new edition by Luther so favourably received by the Catholics, that he said on one occasion, "Our adversaries read the Bible translated more than our people. I believe that Duke George has read it with more care than all the nobility that holds to our side. He said to some one, 'Provided this monk finish the translation of the Bible, he may depart hence when he pleases. I read the Bible much in my youth, while I was a monk.'"§ Hurter remarks the absurdity of those modern writers who repeat one after another that even the clergy were not familiar with the Bible.|| The resolute assertions, in this respect, of Calvin,¶ of Robert and Henry Stephens,** and of Jurieu,†† constitute, certainly, an important fact to enable us to determine the credit due to such witnesses in general.

Of the labours bestowed by learned men, during ages of faith, upon studies that had for object the explanation of the sacred text, I can hardly hope to give a faint idea. I can but recall such names as Menochius, Cajetanus, Estius, Cornelius à Lapide, Calmet, De Sacy. Great commentators had preceded these: such as that profound theologian and admirable historian, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the English Dominican, Nicolas Trevet, whose father was one of the chief ministers of Henry III.; and Pierre de la Pala, of whom Six-

tus of Sienna says that he read a part of his vast comment on the Scriptures in the library of the Dominicans at Lyons, and that his comment on the Psalter alone filled seven volumes.*

To these men the moderns are indebted for many things which tend to facilitate and diffuse a knowledge of the holy Scriptures. It was Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, so deeply versed in them, who first divided the sacred books into chapters, as they are at present.† How admirable are the comments of Albert the Great upon the Psalms! What profound views respecting the interpretations of all Scripture are furnished by the work of Hugo of St. Victor, entitled *Eruditionis Didascalicæ*!‡ How his great disciple, Richard, in his explication of some difficult passages of the apostle, casts a penetrating glance through the abyss of the Scriptures! Yet with what humility do these guides offer their assistance! "Since the divine Scripture can be variously expounded, no one," says St. Thomas, citing St. Augustin, "should so precisely adhere to any one exposition as to persist in maintaining it to be the sense of Scripture, if it can be shown by certain reason to involve an error."§ Many things, indeed, were to be held which are not found in Scripture; but, as St. Bonaventura says, "true faith does not sound at discord with Scripture, but it agrees with it, with an assent not feigned."||

The rules of interpretation followed through the middle ages, which may be found in Mabillon's work on monastic study, were those of the early fathers. They guided men, with St. Augustin, to see the New Testament concealed in the Old, and the Old manifested in the New—to understand all that is contained in the former, as written either of Jesus Christ or for Jesus Christ,¶ and to believe that, wherever the Scripture seems to order a crime or to forbid a beneficent or useful action, it is figured.** They preserved men from all gross conceptions of religious truth. "We read that God is angry, and that he repents; but I am indignant," continues Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remy, "to think that any ecclesiastic should be so ignorant as not to know that in all such passages the authority of the Scripture only speaks

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. i. Lib. 6.

† *Annal. Camaldul.* Lib. lxvi.

‡ Berthier, *Discours sur l'Ecriture Sainte Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. xviii.

§ Michelet, *Mém de Luther*, tom. iii. 90.

|| *Geschichte Inn.* III. book xiii. p. 246.

¶ *In Luc. et in Antidot. Concil. Trid.*

** *Prof. de sa Réponse aux Doct. de Paris: and Apolog. d'Herodot.*

†† *Apol. pour les Réform.* t. i. 145.

* Touron, *Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom.* tom. ii. Lib. 9. 11.

† Hurter, *Geschichte Inn.* III. ii. 59.

‡ Lib. v. vi.

§ P. i. q. lxxviii. art. 1.

|| S. Bonavent. *Breviloquii*, Pars v. cap. vii.

¶ Le P. Lamy, *Introduct. à l'Ecrit.*

** S. August. *de Doct. Christ.* Lib. iii. 16.

after our manner, and uses figures accommodated to our expressions.*

The importance attached to such erudition may be estimated from observing that the highest glory was to be gained by those who cultivated it. Thus St. Boniface, writing from Germany to Archbishop Eckbert in England, to request that he would send him some of the treatises lately written by the great luminary of the British church, Bede, styles him that spiritual priest and investigator of the holy Scriptures.† Similarly, John Scot Erigena, passing over all their other acquirements, says, that besides the holy apostles, there is no one with the Greeks of greater authority in exposition of the holy Scripture than Gregory the theologian; no one with the Romans than Aurelius Augustin.‡ This was, in effect, the highest praise that could be thought of; for Raban Maur says that the science of the holy Scriptures is the foundation and perfection of that wisdom which should belong to clerks.§ To transcribe them had always been a darling occupation of holy men. St. Bonaventura, who knew by heart both the Old and New Testaments, with his own hand wrote two copies of the whole Bible, which Wadding says are still extant.|| The beautiful manuscript of the Gothic translation of the gospels, by Ulphilas, in the fourth century, is in the library of Upsal. The Bible written by Alcuin, and given by him to Charlemagne, contains a multitude of exquisite miniatures. Charles the Bald, who conferred inestimable benefits upon men by his love for science and learning, among other books collected many of these Bibles, which can be still met with in France, Italy, and Germany. He caused a superb copy of the gospels to be written out for the abbey of St. Denis, in letters of gold, which was afterwards given by the emperor Arnulf to the Abbot St. Emmeron at Regensburg. A similar copy he had made for the abbey of Fleuri: he set such a value on the manuscripts which he had collected with such pains and cost, that before his second journey to Italy he made an ordinance that in case of his death his rich library should be divided into three parts, one of which was to be given to his son the prince, another to the abbey of St. Denis, and the third to that of Compiègne.

Bibles were a common donation in the

middle ages; and it is curious to remark how steadily the eyes of the donors were directed to God, even in the act of giving or bequeathing them. Thus it is to St. Cuthbert that William de Carileph, bishop of Durham in the eleventh century, leaves his books, the list of which begins with the Bible in two volumes, as may be seen in the mortuary of that prelate, who built the cathedral. The monastic records are full of such donations. Thus a seigneur, called Peter de Lagny, presents the abbey of St. Geneviève with a canton covered with vines, and also with a Bible.* In the Necrology of the same abbey it is recorded, in the twelfth century, that Master Matthew de Savigny gave the monks a very beautiful Bible and a gold ring.† The word Bibliotheca often signified a Bible. Thus Suger, abbot of St. Denis, in founding the priory of Essone, gave to the church sacerdotal vestments, curtains of silk, two texts, the gradual of the Emperor Charles, and also Bibliotheca in two volumes, which was a Bible‡.

We have already seen many incidental testimonies to the diffusion of a love for biblical study even among the laity of the middle ages; and they who desire further proof may refer to the discourse of Berthier on the sentiments of the church with respect to the use of the holy Scriptures. Theganus says, that the Emperor Louis the Pious knew admirably the sense of all the Scriptures, both the spiritual and moral, and also anagogical sense.§ Writing in the thirteenth century, Vincent of Beauvais says, "In our times, according to the prophecy of Daniel, I behold multiplied every where the knowledge not alone of secular letters, but also of the divine Scriptures, and all men, especially our brethren, assiduously employed in giving historical and mystical expositions of the sacred books, and in solving their more obscure questions."|| The familiarity of the French people with the holy Scriptures could, indeed, be inferred merely from remarking their own popular sayings and forms of expression, which are conceived from so subtle an observation of Scripture, that even biblical scholars might require time for reflection before they could feel their force. Luther, while a monk, studying the Bible in the cloisters of Erfurt, came to the conclusion that the sins of the world around him arose from a want of the

* Epist. Lib. ix. 9.

† S. Bonif. Epist. ixxxv.

‡ De Divis. Nat. iv. 14.

§ Rabani Mauri de Institutione Clericorum, lib. iii. cap. 2.

|| Annal. Minorum, tom. iii.

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. vi.

† Id. tom. xii.

‡ Id. tom. xi.

§ De Gestis Ludovic. Pii, c. 19.

|| Vin. Bellov. Prolog. cap. 11.

knowledge of the Scriptures. He burnt with desire to translate them; he never considered that there had been already sixteen versions in his native tongue; well, at all events, beyond a doubt he was more eloquent than others before him. So he rushed forth, and fared as all men know: but what is worthy of remark is, the fact that in his latter years he recognised his error in having thought that all which was wanting to make men perfect was a greater distribution of Bibles. "Why should new heresies arise," saith he, "when the world has an epicurean contempt for the word of God? It is satiated with it."

Having seen the caution and judgment, the learning and ability, which men in ages of faith brought with them to the study of the holy Scriptures, it only remains to show briefly with what earnest and pathetic tenderness they encourage one another to pursue it. Let us hear St. Bonaventura:—"Among other virtues of the most holy virgin Cecilia, it is said that she always carried the gospel of Christ in her breast, which is to be understood as implying that she always meditated on the life of our Lord. This, of all spiritual exercises, is the most necessary; for it is by studying the life of our Lord Jesus that you will be instructed and strengthened to conduct your course. Hence it is that many illiterate men have been profoundly instructed in the mysteries of God. How do you suppose that the blessed Francis was able to arrive at such an excellence of virtue and of wisdom in understanding the holy Scriptures, unless by means of a familiar conversation and meditation with his Lord Jesus? Hence he ardently studied him, as if he would make his picture; and so affectionately did he seek to imitate him, that he was, as it were, transformed into him."* "I wish you were to know the New Testament by heart," says Father John de Avilla, in answer to one who wrote to consult him.† This study was the soul of the religious state. The father abbot of La Trappe, speaking of Dom Bazile in that austere community, says that his books were the lives of the holy fathers of the desert, the conferences of Cassien, the works of St. Ephrem, of St. John Climachus, the *Ascectics* of St. Basil, but, above all, the holy Scriptures, which were his constant food.‡ "The holy Scriptures are a garden," says St. Chrysostom, "full of the sweetest flowers

—a paradise always refreshed with gentle winds, and the most delightful air." "They who use them rightly," says St. Aldhelm, bishop of Sherburn, "are like bees who disperse themselves on the wings of the morning through a garden of flowers: at one time feasting on the honied leaf of the palmy shrub, at another drinking nectar in the purple pavilion of the flower; so does the devout mind, through the odoriferous meadow of the Scriptures, fly from one beautiful object to another, and saturate itself everywhere with sweetness."*

"When the mind is dissipated," says St. Theresa, "we must have recourse to books in order to fix it; and I confess that the words of the Gospel are more sure to inspire me with attention than the most learned and eloquent works."—"As for me," says Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remi, "I should think myself sufficiently rich in having the science of the Scriptures."† So imbued are the familiar epistles of holy men, from the fifth to the fifteenth century, with the learning of the holy Scriptures, that if the Bible had not been transmitted to us in its present form, we might collect from them the whole of its contents, as far as related to history, doctrine, and instruction of manners. The sublime and affecting manner in which the divine words of our Lord and of his apostles are introduced, as may be witnessed in the letters of Bede, St. Boniface, St. Bernard, Peter the abbot of Cluny, and a multitude of others, shows that their inmost nature had become assimilated to that heavenly food. Their precepts also were express. "Be sedulous in studying the holy Scriptures," says Winfred, in his letter to Nidhard: "quid enim, frater Christiane, à juvenibus decentius quæritur, aut quid à senibus demum sobrius possidetur quam scientia Scripturarum sacrarum."‡ St. Gregory of Tours says, that he remembers when he was a child, during the sickness of his father, having a vision one night of a person, who asked him whether he was well acquainted with a certain book of the holy Scriptures, and charged him to learn it.§ With the practice and precepts of holy monks and hermits the wisdom of the scholastic philosophers coincided. "All truth to me is suspicious," says Richard of St. Victor, "which the authority of Scriptures doth not confirm; nor do I receive Christ in his transfiguration if Moses and Elias be not

* *Meditationes Vitæ Christiæ*, Proem.

† *Epist.* lxvii.

‡ *Rélations de la Mort de quelques Rel. de l'Ab. de la Trappe*, l.

* Aldhelm de Laud. *Virginitat.* cap. 2.

† Pet. Cellens. *Epist.* Lib. iv. 2.

‡ S. Bonif. Mart. et Archiep. *Epist.* I.

§ S. Greg. Tur. *De Gloria Confess.* 42.

present with him."* "Do not in the word of God despise humility," says Hugo of St. Victor, "for by humility you are illuminated to divinity. All this seems to you like mud, and, therefore, perhaps you trample it under your feet. But hear this, 'with that mud the eyes of the blind are opened to see.'"+ Touron observes, that St. Thomas derived his wisdom in great part from his profound meditation on the holy Scriptures, of which he would say with Jerome, *Oro te inter hæc vivere, ista meditari, nihil aliud nosse, nihil querere*. "God is witness," says Savonarola, "how often while I have been preaching to the people, when I have wandered into the subtle doctrine of philosophers with words of human wisdom, that I might show the depth of the sacred word to inflated minds, or to the sciolists of this world, I have perceived, from a certain impatience of my auditors, that I was less attended to not only by rude but by skilful ears; but as often as I have returned to the majestic language of the sacred page, I could discern that I excited a wondrous attention, and that all eyes were fixed upon me as if I were beheld by marble statues.† Truly we see daily that not alone the crowd of the religious, but also that numbers of the most learned and scientific men, after they have once tasted the fountain of the holy Scriptures, leave all other sciences as insipid in comparison, and thenceforth reserve themselves wholly for that study. I know at this time many who have done so."§ "As the holy Scripture," says Duns Scotus, "is a certain knowledge divinely given to direct men to a supernatural end, the things that are necessary to salvation are expressly in Scripture, if obscurely in one place, clearly in another; but it is not necessary that other things, which are not necessary to salvation, should be there expressly delivered."|| The whole school, therefore, seems to speak on this head with the tongue of Dante:—

"— Be ye more staid,
O Christians! not like feathers, by each wind
Removeable. Either Testament,
The Old and New, is yours; and for your guide,
The Shepherd of the Church: let this suffice
To save you."¶

* De Preparatione Animi ad Contemplat. c. 81.

† Prænott. c. 5.

‡ Triumph. Crucis, Lib. 11. 8.

§ Id. 11. 15.

|| Duns Scoti Miscel. 9. vi.

¶ Parad. v.

If we turn to the eminent laymen in the middle ages, who applied to philosophic studies under the inspiration of faith, we find them all possessed of the same conviction, and writing in agreement with the holy school. Thus Antonio Galateus, the celebrated philosopher and physician, writing to his friend Summonti, says, "I wish if you are about to read my writings, that you would first consult the the sacred Scriptures, which are the fountain of salvation, and the law of good and happy life. Then apply to the Platonic and Aristotelian dogmas, and afterwards exert all your strength in attacking your Galateus."* John Picus of Mirandula, expressing his admiration for the holy Scriptures, remarks how, on every ground, they are superior to all the philosophic writings of the Gentiles. Amelius, saith he, the disciple of Plotinus, though an enemy of the Christian religion, yet evidently quotes John the Evangelist; for he says, "And this was that Word by which the things that were made were made." Thus he, an enemy, approves of the sentence, and accepts the faith of him whom he calls a barbarian. Lately, after reading the Tusculans of Cicero, I took up Isaiah the prophet. What comparison between the eloquence even of Æschines or Demosthenes, or of any other orator of Greece, and these words of Isaiah. Audite cœli auribus, percipe terra, quoniam Dominus locutus est: Filios enutrivit—and what follows? "Heaven forbid," exclaims John Francis Picus, his illustrious nephew, writing to Paul Sancierus, "that I should abandon the frequent reading of the holy Scriptures through ardour for the study of Aristotle. For those studies are, in the first place, to be pursued, which infuse the love of God into our hearts; but after them, in second place, those which illuminate the intelligence; for as long as we are in this life, surrounded with this frail flesh, we stand more in need of perfection in the will than in the intelligence."†

But we cannot remain any longer to have such testimonies multiplied. Is any thing further required to fulfil our object, and show that the blessed clean of heart saw God in the holy Scriptures? Then it must be some words from a seraphic page. "Take up the book to read in it," says Thomas à Kempis, "in the same manner as the just

* Ant. Galatei Callipolis Descriptio in Theat. Antiq. Italice, tom. ix.

+ F. Pic. Mir. Epist. Lib. ii.

Simeon took up the child Jesus in his arms; and when you have finished reading close the book, and return thanks for every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, because you have found in the Lord's land a hidden treasure."* "The holy Scripture," says the Abbot Ælred, of Rievaulx, "is a field like that into which holy Isaac went at eventide to meditate, when Rebecca met him, and assuaged his sorrow. Good Jesus! how often do my days decline to evening when grief visits me like the shades of night; when all things that I behold seem flat and insipid and mise-

erable. What then? I go out to meditate in the fields, I revolve the sacred pages, I meet Rebecca: that is, thy grace, O sweet Jesus, dispels my darkness, and turns my tears into celestial joy."*

I think no more is wanting. But the clean of heart now, from this time forward, become encompassed with such radiance, that mine eyes can hardly follow them:

"——— O trinal beam

Of individual star, that charm'st them thus!

Vouchsafe one glance to gild our storm below."†

CHAPTER XVI.



MAN is created for this end," says St. Augustin, "that he should understand God; understanding, that he should love him; loving, possess; and possessing, enjoy him for ever." Such was the conclusion of the school respecting this great question, on which the philosophers of old had delivered such various judgments. In ages of faith, the chief good was known, the last end of all things was known, and virtue itself derived its value from this knowledge. "We do not enjoy virtues," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but we make use of them; for although they are of themselves to be loved and desired, yet not, on account of themselves only, but on account of God finally, do the saints in hope, and sometimes in deed, reap them. We use virtues, therefore, in order that by them we may enjoy the blessed Trinity, that is the chief and incommutable good."†

In proportion, however, as the blessed clean of heart drew nearer to the enjoyment of that vision, which is the reward

of faith, they passed beyond the sphere of history, and the mode of their progressive illumination becomes less visible. As long as it was a question of their beholding God in creatures, in the miraculous operations of his Providence, in the acts which belong to exoteric mysticism, in the traditions of the human race, and in the holy Scriptures, it was not difficult for one of earthly temper like him who collects their scattered thoughts on this page, to illustrate their advance, and confirm it from historic records; but now that we are required to observe them in relation to the church, and to the sacred mysteries of religion—acts of love, vigils of praise and prayer, and midnight choir, all shadows of the service done above, all fruitful in the gifts of esoteric mysticism, being the means ordained to conduct them to the glorious consummation of their immortal destiny, our course seems about to terminate in darkness; for what eye can follow that illuminated life succeeding to the purgative which leads immediately to the intimate union of the soul with God? Here each step transcends our conception. History indeed attests, from time to time, incident-

* Thom. à Kemp. *Doctrinale Juvenum*, cap. v.

† Hug. St. Vict. *Speculum de Myst. Eccles.* cap. 9.

* Ælred. in c. 15.

† Dante, *Parad.* xxxi.

tally the fact of holy rites and mysteries, vested in dense impenetrable blaze, having been observed throughout the ages of faith. We know that the church, as one mysterious family, was found every where; that from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, the clean oblation was daily offered up; that seraphic hymns ascended at benediction from evening choirs; that sacrifice was the great business of life with countless multitudes in every age during sixteen centuries; that men participated in the sacred mysteries of communion at the holy mass; that they had constantly access from morning till evening to the sacramental presence of Christ, which was reserved for them every where; that they prayed, that they meditated, that they remained often fixed in contemplation; that they experienced ecstasies, and sometimes in that state expired; but with that knowledge our observation ends; for if thou dost require us to show what corresponded to these outward acts in the interior world of the soul, to fathom the full tide of spiritual joy and love resulting from them, to unfold what they saw when so employed, to explain the mode of the operation of these mysteries, or to say why such means should have been ordained, ah! greatly hast thou mistaken the limits of our skill. High rapture, ineffable transport to the intelligence, no doubt, would be the power to reply;

——— "But not the soul

That is in heav'n most lustrous, nor the seraph
That bath his eyes most fix'd on God, shall solve
What thou hast ask'd: for in the abyss it lies
Of the everlasting statute, sunk so low
That no created ken may fathom it."*

This alone we know, that there is no Thabor without the road of the cross, no transfiguration without a passion, no gift without engagement, no full power without full obedience; such we can discover to be the immutable, fundamental law, in the mystic kingdom.†

There is, however, another path bordering upon this divine world, which, to a certain point, is open for us; for as the philosophers taught that natural things were the works of God, by which men could arrive at a knowledge of his virtue and glory; so the men of faith showed, with the friar Savonarola,‡ that the things which were done in the church, perceptible

by the senses and by reason, were the works of the same God, by which they could arrive at the knowledge of the majesty and glory of Jesus Christ, who is to us invisible; that while the one saw God in the wondrous works of nature, the other beheld him, as it were, permanently incarnate in the Church, present in those who governed it, present in the lowest of its members, and continually re-appearing under a sacramental form in the mysteries of faith, and with such clearness and certainty too, that the mere observation of the effect which that vision wrought upon them, yea the mere reflection as seen painted in their countenances, was thought by many to furnish one of the most convincing proofs that all things announced by revelation to the human race were true. Some, indeed, have presumed to pass beyond the mark, and ask, how could God establish or preserve such a society on earth, and how could he give us what he promised? and others vainly have essayed to comprehend infinity, and make the mortal measure the divine. Well it would have been for the latter had they hearkened to such warning sounds as come to every human mind, resembling those which Dante heard when he looked too stedfastly upon Beatrice, the light of divine truth, conveying nought but this "too fix'd a gaze."* They laid claim to more philosophy, yet alas! in sooth, beating their pinions, thinking to advance, they backward fell. Grace ought first to have been gained, and then they would have known, with Hugo of St. Victor, that by loving, rather than by disputing, men advance towards God.† You ask, why should such stupendous acts of condescension be required to purify the soul? Brother, the answer would have been, no eye of man not perfected, nor fully ripened in the flame of love, may fathom this decree. The human mind, as Abadæus says, must of necessity consort with darkness, either with that which arises from the cupidities and prejudices of the mortal nature, or with that which arises from God himself, and which brings hereafter the effulgence of his glory:

——— O splendour!

O sacred light eternal! who is he,
So pale with musing, in Pierian shades,
Or with that fount so lavishly imbued,
Whose spirit would not fail him in the essay
To represent thee such as thou didst seem
To hearts that were made pure.

* Dante, Par. xxi.

† Goërres die Christliche Mystik, i. 175.

‡ Triump. Crucis, Lib. i. c. 1.

* XXXII.

† Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesie, cap. ix.

All things are veiled to your mortal eyes; you cannot discern the real nature of the meanest plant or reptile—and yet you would behold the sovereign God divested of a veil and shadow. Ah! it should be the dictate even of that natural philosophy, in which you take such pride, to say with the ascetic, "I have truly, and I adore him whom the angels adore in heaven; but, at present, I in faith, they in essence and without veil. It becomes me to be content with the light of true faith, and in that to walk until shall dawn the day of eternal brightness, and the shadows of figures pass away." Savonarola remarks, that "assistance towards the immediate attainment of the final end of man, was one of the innumerable benefits resulting to the human race from the Incarnation of the Divine Word. The beatitude of man consists, indeed, in the vision of the divine essence; but a consideration of its immense sublimity might deter him from attempting to attain it, therefore he was shown a union of the divine and human nature, in order to have argument for believing that a union of his intelligence with God was not impossible; and to his senses were presented the Incarnate Word, the humanity of Christ, with all the mysteries of his institution clothed in material forms, by which the clean of heart, even in the present life, could truly, and not in figure, see God."* Moreover, the divine wisdom provided, by the discipline of the church, as well as by the psychological laws of sympathy with external nature, that things, of themselves senseless and earthly, should be instrumental to spiritual visions: therefore, the bones and other relics of canonized saints, symbols that denoted ecclesiastical authority, the rites attending festivals as required by the rubric, the image of the cross, the paintings which represented Christ, his blessed Mother, the holy apostles, and the other friends of God, were the means of preserving innumerable minds in communion with the celestial world; inasmuch that, where faith had diffused its highest illumination, a glance at any of these objects was frequently followed by ecstasy. The effects which they produced upon the clean of heart are attested in numberless authentic records; as in those relative to St. Rosa of Peru, St. Catherine of Sienna, and others of whom Goërres speaks.

But visions of the highest order must

now engage our thoughts. Proceeding then with timid steps, reverential and subdued, the initiated few, who have outstretched the neck in time for food of angels, will not require to be told that the purified race saw God in those adorable mysteries of faith, which placed before their ravished eyes, in presence real, Him from whom perfection to the perfect springs. Yes! there is on earth a light, whose goodly shine makes the Creator visible to all created, that in seeing him alone have peace. Throughout the circle of the Church all is one beam reflected from this first, giving to every part light and warmth. "Moses did not dare to look upon the fire; and, behold," exclaims St. Odo of Cluny, "there is more on the altar to which we so unworthily approach; for the fire was not God, but a creature from which the voice of God proceeded; but here is the body of Christ, in which dwells all the plenitude of divinity."*

Such was the great mystery of faith, the divine deposit, the great traditional secret of the Christian family, recognised even by schismatics in the earliest times, as St. Optatus remarks, "the principle, in short, from which the whole Catholic society, spread over the world, derived its strength and its vitality: all that it prized flowed from this source—the divine Eucharist, most holy, sanctifying all that was most holy and sanctifying, in which, as the Master of the Sentences said, "He is wholly taken, who is the fountain and origin of all grace."† And yet, O speech! how feeble and how faint art thou to give conception birth! Rejoicing spirits encompass it with so divine a song, that fancy's ear records it not; and the pen passeth on and leaves a blank. "O, how admirable thy operations Lord!" exclaim the men who thus saw God, "how powerful thy virtue! how ineffable thy truth! Thou hast said, and all things were made; and this too is done which thou hast ordered. Wondrous thing, surpassing human intelligence!—rejoice my soul, and render thanks for such a noble gift; for such a singular consolation left for thee in this valley of tears!"

If any one inquired respecting the manner in which the mystery of the Eucharist was accomplished, by what means God and our nature join, he was shortly answered

* S. Odonis, Abb. Clun. ii. Collat. Lib. ii. Bibliothec. Clun.

† Pet. Lomb. Sent. Lib. iv. dist. 8.

* Triump. Crucis, Lib. iii. 7.

in the words of the same great authority, "Mysterium fidei credi salubriter potest, investigari salubriter non potest." Enough! it was the saving oblation, fragrant with virgin sweetness, foretold by prophets, instituted by Him whose will is power and whose work is mercy, and offered up throughout the universal Church by the elect of God.

The historical question, respecting the antiquity of this belief, need not detain us long. In the administration of all mysteries, the discipline of the Church has varied in different ages; so that some objectors have as much reason to require immersion in baptism, as others to complain of the restriction of the chalice. In times of persecution, the holy communion used to be sent under the sole species of bread, whereas, in the assemblies, children only received under the species of wine. The question, however, is respecting the doctrine; and the most learned of the moderns, Leibnitz, admits that the real presence was that of the primitive church.*

St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, speaking of certain heretics, says, "they abstain from the Eucharist and the prayer, because they do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for our sins." These heretics were the gnostics, who, as St. Epiphanius says, deny that Christ came in the flesh; and as it was their tenet that God never became incarnate, they could not assent to the doctrine of his sacramental presence. That this belief of the primitive Church had followed every where the preaching of the apostles and of apostolic men, is also clear from history. "We are compelled to believe," says a recent historian of the middle ages, who, with the same breath, is so unhappy as to declare his own incredulity, "that the Anglo Saxons understood Christ to be immolated on the altar, and we may observe that the same opinions were entertained by the Scottish ecclesiastics."† Such, most assuredly, was the belief of the universal Church. It is not to be supposed, however, that there were no contradicting voices. The same description of men who opposed and derided our divine Saviour in the person of Jesus, walking in Palestine, resisted and defied him in sacramental presence, in the assemblies of the faithful. "Si discipuli durum habuerunt istum ser-

monem, quid inimici?" asks St. Thomas. How should the impure discern God in time, who, without some total renovation of their nature, will not see him for eternity? How must not their blindness correspond with that of demons, who, as the Angel of the School remarks, cannot know God, though most manifest according to himself, because they have not a clean heart by which alone God is seen.* In some of the very ancient chronicles, published by Dacherius, we read of individuals who presumed to question the divine doctrine of the blessed Sacrament; nor was it only the profane and intemperate who evinced hostility: the pride of the understanding was also liable to create a disposition to philosophize in opposition to the simplicity of divine faith. The ninth century beheld men of a character from which such opposition was almost inevitable.—Gottschalk is described by Hincmar as a man of elate mind, impatient of quiet, desirous of new words, inflamed with an insatiable ambition of honour, rash and tumultuous, that he might render his name famous by a vain ostentation of mind and a certain false novelty.† In the same age, John Erigena composed a book on the Eucharist, which, being written more in the style of a philosophical treatise than of a theological work, contained expressions that differed from the universal canonized language of theologians: though, as we have already remarked, it is impossible to discover the nature of the opinion, as the book was lost soon after his time; and, at all events, the error to which these expressions were thought favourable, which was immediately condemned, made no impressions, and no one attempted to support it; nevertheless, Hincmar of Rheims, and Adrevald Floriacensis collected the Sentences of the holy fathers to guard against the danger of any novelty being introduced.

It was not till the eleventh century that Berenger appeared, that degenerate disciple of St. Fulbert of Chartres. To him opposed themselves, of the Episcopal order, Adelman of Brixen, Hugo of Lincoln, Guitmundus Aversanus, Deoduinus Leodiensis, Lanfranc of Canterbury, and Durandus. Synods were especially convened to condemn him,—at Rome thrice, under St. Leo IX., and once severally at Vercueil, Paris, Tours, Florence, Rouen, and Poitiers.

* Syst. Theolog. l

† Lardner, Cyclop. iii. 328.

* l. q. lxiv. art. i.

† Epist. ad Nicol. pass.

Obedient to the sentence which condemned his error, Berenger returned to France a sincere penitent, and died at Tours, in 1088, a rare example of contrition, as is attested by Clarus Floriacensis, William of Malmesbury, St. Antoninus, Vincent of Beauvais, and Martinus Polonus. Then followed an interval of peace. Though still, no doubt, the Eucharistic vision of God was reserved for the clean of heart, for allusion is often made to the blindness of others. "We read in the Gospel," says St. Bernard, "that while the Saviour preached on one occasion on the mystery of eating his body, some said, 'Durus est hic sermo,' and that these no longer went with him; but that the disciples being asked by him whether they also wished to go away, replied, 'Domine, ad quem ibimus? Verba vitæ æternæ habes.' So I say to you, my brethren, down to the present day it is manifest that the words which Jesus speaks are spirit and life, and some follow him, but to others they seem hard, and they seek elsewhere a miserable consolation."*

In the sixteenth century the controversy was revived, but it was in the more ancient form of gross sensuality resisting faith, rather than in that of a speculative genius desiring to appeal to reason from its decisions. An historian cannot find, through all the gloomy circles of the world's history, spirits that swelled so proudly against God as those which were then enrolled against the mysteries of faith: but still the banners were the same. The weapons of the modern adversaries are, therefore, only those of the old ones refurbished; and we find accordingly, that the mode of resisting them, in the early and middle ages, was the same as that which is now adopted by the guides of holy truth. The early fathers, in order to show their hearers the possibility of this mystery, remind them of the most stupendous miracles, such as the change of the rod of Moses into a serpent, the fall of manna during forty years, the multiplication of the loaves in the desert, the change of water into wine, and in fine the creation of the world. St. Chrysostom compares the act of consecration to the mystery of the Incarnation, which involves, he says, a still greater difficulty;† and by his words, if duly weighed, that argument is void which often has perplexed the foolish; for, in being man, and in sacramental presence,

it follows, as he observes, that Christ was at once visible and invisible, and that in neither manifestation did he depart from one place to another, or deprive the heavens of his glory in order to come into the world, or remain on earth to accomplish the work of our deliverance and sanctification. But in what manner, you ask, is this done? "Do you not fear," exclaims St. Chrysostom in reply, "do you not shudder? What! if any one were to ask in what manner our bodies and souls shall be immortal, would it not be a ridiculous question? Because it does not belong to the human understanding to inquire into such things, but only to believe: there should be no curious investigation where the immense power of the Promiser is a sufficient demonstration. Why do you search into inscrutable things?"* The same line of argument is steadily pursued through the middle ages. All the objections advanced by modern adversaries were then anticipated and refuted. Richard of St. Victor remarks that "when Christ gave his body to his disciples he carried it in his hands;" that "he is torn and never injured, distributed daily in innumerable places and always whole and undivided."† They could discern consequences without the assistance of our writers.

St. Anselm seems to have foreseen all the objections of the nineteenth century, in his treatise *De Sacramento Altaris*, when he alludes to persons who are troubled by certain passages in the works of St. Augustin. Let us hear St. Hugo of Lincoln addressing Berenger, "argue no longer, I pray, concerning the divine Omnipotence, for as you cannot comprehend how the Word was made flesh, so neither can you understand how that bread is changed into the flesh, and that wine transformed into the blood, unless the faith of Omnipotence teach you. Cease to attack the celestial mystery. Consider that the will and word of God predominates over all nature, and that he is able to change them according to what is written, *Mutabis ea, et mutabuntur*; for with God to will and to perform are the same."‡

"You argue with subtilty against the divine doctrine of the Eucharist," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but what can your

* *De Diversis*, Sermon. v.

† Hom. 2. in Matt.

* Hom. vi. in Joan.

† Ric. S. Vict. de Contemplatione, p. 1. Lib. iv. c. 18.

‡ Hugonis Lingonensis Tractat. de Corpore et Sanguine Domini.

rhetoric, or sophistry, or your ratiocination, effect here? This is to cast dust against the stars. Your dialectics cannot reach so high. Behold where you stand, and mark how much higher is faith than all your intelligence."* Methinks the blessed clean of heart could attest the reality of their vision, in language that from being pious, was not the less philosophical, and we might assuredly add, not the less imbued with love and mercy; for hear the concluding words of one who has recently treated on this divine mystery, in allusion to the men who are engaged by their profession to deny it: "Are they aware," he asks, "of what they are doing? Are they aware that they are attacking a faith the most fruitful in every kind of grace; a faith which preserves in all places the spirit of devotion and of sacrifice? May He who was meek and humble of heart, in presence of the proud ingratitude of those whom he came to save, remove from our lips the least word of bitterness against these unhappy despisers of the most admirable of his gifts. And how would it be possible to speak to them of it excepting in a language full of love! If such a language did not exist, it would be invented for the purpose of speaking of the Eucharist. But, at the same time, a mournful indignation constrains us to rise up against their deplorable ministry. Profoundly impressed with this double sentiment, we should not know how to express this sorrowful affection with which they inspire us, if we did not remember the words of Christ to the first despiser of the mystery of faith—those words so tender and so overwhelming—Friend, wherefore art thou come? Amice, ad quid venisti?"†

Turning our backs upon these spirits, plunged in woe and darkness, without remedy, since what hope for them who want that manna, without which he roams through the rough desert retrograde, who most toils to advance his steps, let us briefly mark the sentiment of the blessed clean of heart in ages of faith, with respect to the sacramental Eucharistic vision of God. In the first place they too had difficulties—they too had the trials of intelligence and of sense, but they triumphed over them—they too could hear the serpent, but they turned from him with the quickness of instinct. To whom should we go, O Lord! they cried with a doctor

of the Church. "Whither should we go? To flesh and blood? To reason? To philosophy? To the wise of the world? To murmurers? To the unbelieving? To those who daily ask us how can he give us his flesh to eat? How can he be in heaven, if, at the same time, we eat his flesh on earth? No, Lord, we do not wish to go to them, nor to those who leave thee: we will follow St. Peter, and will say, Master, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." "Faith," say the schoolmen, "is an obscure habit, infused into the soul; it is figured by the cloud which covered the Israelites, which was both darksome and illuminative—obstructing the view of the Egyptians, and enlightening the faithful people." Man living in darkness can only be enlightened by darkness, as the prophet king observes, saying, "the night teacheth knowledge to the night." Do you desire the recompense of intellectual purity, the beatitude of the clean of heart, you must believe, "for unless ye believe," says the prophet, "ye shall not understand."* As St. Gregory observes on our Lord's appearance to the two disciples, "to them," speaking of him, "he exhibited his presence, but to them doubting concerning him, he concealed himself."

The blessed sacrament of the Eucharist, like the doctrine of baptism and the incarnation, was a trial of faith. Did men find this faith faltering within their hearts? Did their reason endeavour to revolt? Did their senses attempt to exert more than their due influence? The clean of heart were not troubled; they only prayed with greater fervency; they recalled to mind Jesus Christ instituting this wonderful sacrifice, with an irresistible authority, and with words of life; they beheld the Apostles preaching throughout the world this same sacrifice; they followed this immemorial tradition of the Church which has received this mystery, which has firmly believed in it and practised it, without interruption, defending it unceasingly against all the enemies which hell has raised up against it. They retraced before their eyes a lively and rapid image of the numberless prodigies which it has effected, having been the strength of martyrs, the constancy of confessors, the purity of virgins, the patience of saints, and their detachment from the world, the hope, the consolation of all. They too, therefore, believed, borne alone by the ex-

* Hugo St. Vict. *Speculum de Mysteriis Ecclesie*, cap. 7.

† Gerbet *S. Matt.* xxvi. 50.

* Isa. vii.

ample and authority of the whole Church, by so many virtues and miracles, by the reason of God, before which theirs was a pure nothing. They approached with confidence and humility; faith, recovering strength, charity was reanimated; their Saviour waited for them; he gave himself to them, a flood of grace flowed into their soul; and thus did a trial become for them, the most excellent and signal of all graces.

This was the light which renewed the face of the earth, and replaced Eden in its wilderness. This changed all things; this appeased the restless cravings of the human heart—substituted truth for error, and dissipated its enemies. O holy Church, Catholic and Roman, if all that hitherto is told of thee were in one praise concluded, it were too weak to furnish out this turn. The human race had preserved the remembrance of an original society between God and man, and the same tradition had perpetuated the hope, that more intimate communications would be re-established by the Redeemer, universally expected. The belief in a God present only by his grace, was never able to satisfy that immense craving of the human heart, for a closer union with the Deity. "The writings of the old philosophers abound with indications of its existence," Plotinus says, "that the vision of God is a vision of such beauty, and worthy of such love, that without it, however rich in other goods, man is most unhappy."* Porphyry held, that by certain theurgical consecrations, minds were rendered capable of seeing God.† Plato says, "that men of all kinds taste of certain pleasures, but that to taste the delight of being able to see the essence of all pleasure, and of all existence, is impossible for any one but a philosopher."‡ "This desire not understood aright," as a French theologian says, "erewhile perverted well nigh all the world, so that it turned to fabled names of Jove, and Mercury, and Mars, for every vicious practice is founded on a just feeling, diverted from its true object, as every error is founded on the abuse of some truth. The propensity to theurgy which was so vehement among all pagan nations, as well as that inclination to recognise, in extraordinary personages, some god veiled under human forms, arose, therefore, from

this natural longing of the rational creature, to recover its original felicity. This divine instinct pervaded, agitated the whole universe, and all worship, even in the superstitions connected with it, was in some measure the prophetic aspiration of the human race, seeking every where for the personal presence of the divinity. Jesus Christ appears, and the world breathes again. The expectation was fulfilled. "This faith in the real presence produced immediately," as Gerbert remarks, "this remarkable result, that among Christians, the universal mania for divination—for the invocation of spirits, for magical operations, was suddenly suppressed. It was not merely the exterior practices that yielded to the severe prohibitions of the Church—it was the propensity itself, hitherto so violent, so indomitable, that became appeased in the heart of man, and gave way to a profound calm—the natural consequence of an immense desire having been at length satisfied." So through the long lapse of ages which faith illuminated, there is heard from the race of men an uninterrupted voice of praise, and literally witnessed a sleepless act of adoration. For, behold God, the Saint of saints, the Creator of men, and the Lord of angels! is present on the altar. Those who are in chosen fellowship advanced to the great supper of the blessed Lamb, whereon who feeds hath every wish fulfilled, can say with truth that Jesus, the most sweet, most benign Jesus, is in the midst of them; they see him—blessed are they. They see God. "O, invisible Creator of the world, how wondrously dost thou act with us!" exclaims one of that happy number, "how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose things with thy elect, in offering them in the sacrament thyself!" But, alas! the blindness of man!

Why does not every heart commingle with the flame that shrouds that glory? Is obduracy to be justified by repeating the language of the disciples, who, when they had Christ with them, at the same time desired to see the Father, saying, "Domine, ostende nobis Patrem, et sufficit nobis," not having then been taught that to whom the Son sufficeth not, the Father could not be manifest; or, are we to go back to the question of the benighted philosopher, and ask with Cicero, "Tibi hoc incredibile, quia beatissimum?" Why should not the Saviour's promise be fulfilled? Why should not the clean of heart be comforted? Yes, when we recall

* S. August. de Civ. Dei, x. 16.

† Id. x. 9.

‡ De Repub. Lib. ix.

to mind those ancient holy men, many of them the wonder of their age for wisdom, the glory of their age for earthly grandeur, who evinced seraphic love for this divine mystery; when we recollect the number of profound angelic intelligences, which recognised in it the source of all their light, of all their virtue; when with the eyes of mind we behold them bowed unto the earth, in presence of the Eucharist, or with looks directed towards the hallowed steps, so full of joy, as if they saw descending from them every light in heaven, the natural impulse is to exclaim with the Ascetic, "*O vera ardens fides eorum, probabile existens argumentum sacræ præsentiae tuæ!*" Yes, for not to speak of streams of living radiance, which played round the outward fleshly dwelling, as we read of Vincent Ferrier, the bishop Kentigern, Rosa of St. Mary, Thomas the Lombard, Barnabas of Pistorio, Tolomei, Catherine of Bologna, and innumerable others,* the fragrant of heaven rising from within proclaimed, that he had visited the human soul, and entered it with his glory. Here, at length, is order with equality, the rich man and the beggar side by side, in charity made one; for what availeth ignorance or skill, where God immediate rules, and nature awed suspends her sway? These hearts of the ages of faith are not left without afflation of eternal bliss; they exhale a perfume, transcending all sweetness, which attests that they have commingled with the source of all delight—the author of all purity—that God has revealed himself within them, and that he who had no rest upon the cross, has rested there. "*Et reclinabit in te,*" says Richard of St. Victor, "*qui reclinatorium non habuit in cruce.*"†

"Truly it is thy beloved who visiteth thee," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but he cometh invisible—he cometh occult—he cometh incomprehensible—he cometh that he may move thee, not that he may be seen by thee—he cometh that he may admonish thee, not that he may be comprehended by thee—he cometh not that he may fulfil thy desires, but that he may excite thy affection—he presenteth thee with the first fruits of his love, not with the plenitude of perfect satiety." "Do you feel regret," my sisters, said St. Theresa, "at not being able to behold him with your bodily eyes? Such a regret is little reasonable. It is one thing to have beheld him as he was formerly, when clothed with all the appearances of

humanity, and it is another to contemplate him as he is now, resplendent with celestial glory. How could mortal eyes sustain his vision? Be thankful that he is pleased to veil his majesty, when you have permission to approach him."* His beauty so shines, that, were no tempering interposed, thy mortal puissance would, from its rays, shrink as the leaf doth from a thunder-bolt.

The recompense of the clean of heart was also the principle of their spiritual existence—they beheld God from being pure, and they were pure in consequence of beholding him; as the angels cannot sin, because their beatitude consists in seeing God by essence, "the essence of God," as St. Thomas says, "being the essence of goodness."† This leads us to consider the outward effects of the Eucharistic vision in ages of faith. "*Plus valet Deus operari, quam homo intelligere potest,*" and he who wrote these words had himself within his own bosom experience of their truth. Of the extraordinary visions resulting from the divine Eucharist, Goërres has produced instances. Truly wondrous things, in this respect, are related of Petrus Tolosanus, Angela of Foligno, the abbot Hugo of Cluny, the Cistercian Juliana, Cassetus the Carmelite, St. Francis Borgia, St. Catherine of Sienna, and countless others.‡

Let us hear St. Augustin attesting only the ordinary results. "*Inebriantur ab ubertate domus tuæ.*" Some great thing, I know not what, is promised to us. Does he wish to say it, and is he unable, or is it that we do not understand? I fear not to say, my brethren, that not even by the holy tongues and hearts, through which truth is announced to us, can what they would announce be either uttered or conceived. It is a thing great and ineffable, and they themselves only see in part, as the Apostle says, "Now we see in part, as in an ænigma, but then face to face." Behold, they seeing in an ænigma, thus burst forth: what shall we be then, when we shall see face to face, what they could not find a heart to conceive, or a tongue to reveal, or men to understand? But why does he say, "*Inebriantur ab ubertate domus tuæ?*" He sought for a word to speak of human things, which he said; and because he saw men losing their understanding, through the immoderate drinking of wine, he saw what he would express; because when that ineffable joy is received, the

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 322.

† In Cantic. Cant. 12.

* The Road to Perfection. † 1. Q. lxii. art. 8.

‡ Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 119.

human understanding as it were perishes, it becomes divine, and is drunken with the abundance of the house of God. Whence in another Psalm it is said, "*Calix tuus inebrians quam præclarus est!*" This was the cup of which the martyrs drank, when going to their passion, they no longer knew their own. Who so drunken as he who does not distinguish his weeping wife, or children, or parents? They did not distinguish, they did not think that these were before their eyes. Wonder not, for they were drunken. Whence were they drunken? Behold, they took the cup whence they were drunken. Wherefore he also returned thanks to God, saying, "*Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo.*" Therefore, brethren, we are children of men; and we hope under the shadow of his wings, and we are drunken of the abundance of his house. "*Inebriabuntur ab ubertate domus tuæ: et torrente voluptatis tuæ potabis eos:*" water is called a torrent when it comes with a rushing force. There will be a rushing of the mercy of God, to refresh and inebriate those who place their trust under the shadow of his wings.*

If when the Word made flesh dwelt in the midst of men, the mere touch of his vestments was able to cure the sick, can we doubt, asks St. Theresa, that a lively faith will obtain miracles from him when he comes to establish his residence within us?† The ordinary miracles which this mystic vision wrought in ages of faith, of which even history must take note, were those of virtues and those of wisdom. "Love itself is knowledge," as St. Gregory says;‡ and here was the fountain of all true love, and consequently of all wisdom. Do you ask whence the Angel of the School derived that light which has illuminated the Church? The historian of his order says expressly, that he drew it from the holy sacrament of the altar: all his works demonstrate, that it was this prime enlightener who gave him strength on the high triumph of his Church to gaze, and virtue to utter what he saw; nor is it less certain that it was from this disposing influence supreme the feeling artist learned to trace those lustrous images of the pure and holy which have made cities and realms glorious; for here all perfection was vouchsafed, and every gift that life could teem with; so that the human nature,

without that sweet medicine to clear and strengthen sight, never was, or can be, such as it was in them. The fountain at whose source the clean of heart drank their beams, supplied them in as many modes with light as there were different offices in the Christian life, each according to the virtue it required, equal in love and sweet affection. "Look then," saith the poet contemplatist of these ages, "how lofty and how vast the eternal might, which, broken and dispersed over such countless mirrors, yet remained whole in itself and one, as at the first."*

And here I must observe, while speaking of the moral consequences of the Eucharistic vision, that if there were no other evidence in proof of the divine origin of the Catholic religion, an attentive observer would feel compelled to believe that God was its author, from the one consideration of its effects produced, through this divine mystery, upon the human nature; so exactly do they correspond with all its wants and all the peculiarities of its constitution; so completely do they restore all its parts, and establish an harmonious unity. Whence could such tempering and moulding proceed but from the same intelligence and hand which created man? for it is this which completes him, which purifies, which gives the last touch to this admirable painting of the rational creature. Faith is like those transparent unctions, which revive the work of the artist when it is sunk into the canvass, or clouded over and defiled; it changes nothing of the original lines, not a stroke of the pencil, however fine, perishes under its gentle action; it only refreshes and restores the whole to that pristine liveliness and beauty, which it possessed when first it left its author's hands. Such is the Catholic religion in general and the Eucharistic union in particular, in relation to the human character. It is not that it destroys the inequality of natural gifts, or that it yields the fruit of subsequent acquisition, but that it gives an ineffable charm, something heavenly indescribable, to all gifts, and a grace which every one can distinguish, and which no artificial acquirements can ever supply. Take any instance of a nature which has been wholly consigned to this influence, and then judge: pass by the natural virtues and wisdom and nobleness of men, which you might say, perhaps, could be ascribed to studies, experience, and condition; stand and consider the ignorant and simple, who draw all from the Church, from the altar,

* St. Augustin Enarrat. in Ps. xxiv.

† The Road to Perfection.

‡ Hom. 27. in Evang.

* Par. xxix.

from faith and its mysteries. Remark that maiden, wife, and mother. Can the purest and highest intelligence conceive any thing more assimilated to the goodness and purity of God? You cannot be blind to the difference which exists under similar circumstances of nature where Catholicism has not been applied. See how many evils attach themselves to the best and sweetest dispositions, which are corrected here. See how this softens down every thing harsh, removes every thing ridiculous and unamiable; and O, what dulcet, rich, and glorious tones does it bring forth, and yet so secret in its operation, that all the while we think it is only nature. Nor do we err; for this, or rather approaching this, was nature in the state of innocence. "We know," says Savonarola, "that they who frequent these mysteries piously are so delighted in the divine worship, that they often remain in ecstasy with bodies immovable,—that their countenance changes, emitting beams of sanctity, which render them lovely and venerable to all. And though in former times this occurred oftener than now, yet at the present day also we know many, not alone the simple, but the wise, in whom all this is verified. Whence then this ecstasy? whence this fervour? these warm sighs, these delicious tears, this ineffable jubilation of the Church, sounding in hymns and canticles of such passing sweetness? If these mysteries, these temples, these altars, these vestments, this order of ceremonies belong to vanity and labour lost, could man, especially when wise and of penetrating genius, by the use of these things be so wonderfully exalted and transformed? Could such illumination proceed from lies? Even the very order and the signification of the things which are done in the Church, must be of divine, not of human invention: for there is nothing in this form of worship irrational, nothing without sense; but there is throughout the whole a harmony and an adaptation of parts like what we find in the universal works of nature, which no one, without perverse obstinacy can refuse to ascribe to God."*

But let us attend to the practice of the middle ages. A sense of their own indignity was not suffered by the ancient guides to interfere with the devotion of frequent access to this grace of sacramental union, and the manner in which they explain their conduct in this respect, is very characteristic of their exquisite art of blending the highest with the lowest things; "for," says Louis of

Blois, "as the son of a king while a youth rejoices in being able to play with those boys who are of obscure birth, and who are clad in vile raiment, so also the Son of the great King, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, willingly joins himself, by the sacrament of the Eucharist, not only to the perfect, but also to those who are obnoxious to many imperfections, who do not love their imperfections, but endeavour to grow better, and to be delivered from all deadly sin by the help of God."*

Mabillon has shown that, in the tenth century, the laity were required, under strict obligation, to receive the holy communion at least four times in each year.† This was only determining the minimum consistent with the Christian profession; for the desire of the Church had always been that so earnestly expressed by St. Licinius of Angers, in the sixth age, that the people would frequently partake of that divine food, by means of which their Saviour would remain in them, and they in Him. The fathers of the Council of Paris, in the year 829, addressed the emperor Louis le Debonnaire, in these terms: "We warn you to receive the body of our Lord whenever it is possible for you to do so; and, by your example, to excite those of your court to communicate frequently."‡ At that time the practice of daily communion was frequent. Symphorus Amalarius wrote to recommend it; but Genadius of Marseilles only exhorted the people to communicate every Sunday. Walafrid Strabo seemed to consider that those who communicated but once in the year, at Easter, through a professed fear of being unworthy to approach it oftener, were proved by that very delay unworthy of communion then, since communion is a remedy against sins.§

By the second council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in the year 836, the faithful were required to receive the body of the Lord every Sunday, "lest by withdrawing from the Sacraments, they should withdraw from salvation." Profane historians are obliged to notice the immense influence which the Christian mysteries produced upon the whole order of society. Hence it was that an interdict was found to be so great an evil. *Immensa vitia super crescebant*, say the contemporary writers.|| Life, in all its ways, and turnings, sanctified by the Church, appeared, says

* Lud. Blos. *Enchirid. Parvulorum*, Lib. i. in fin.

† *Præfat. in Sæcul. Bened.* 3.

‡ Longueval, *Hist. de l'Eglise Gal.* tom. v. 320.

§ De Reb. Eccles. cap. 20.

|| *Hist. Epp. Antiss. in Labbé Bibl. T. 1.*

* *Triump. Crucis*, ii. 10.

Hurter, alluding to an interdict, to be now severed from it. The sun-like splendour of higher consecrations was eclipsed, and the earthly existence remained without any intervention of the heavenly.*

It remains only to consider the clean of heart in relation to the last sphere, which sees completion of their lofty aim in a mystic union with Him, who lives ever, and for ever reigns. "Do you wish to be great?" asks St. Augustin. "Begin," he continues, "by being little. Do you desire to construct a vast and lofty fabric? Think first about the foundation of humility; the higher is to be your structure, the deeper must be its foundation. What is to be the height of our building? to what elevation does its summit reach? I will tell you in one word, to the sight of God! Behold how lofty a thing it is! What a thing it is to see God! They who worshipped false gods, could easily see them; but they saw them who had eyes and saw not. To us is promised the vision of the living and seeing God."† The clean of heart discerned the whole immensity of this prodigious promise, both with respect to the future and to the present life, and yet it alarmed them not. Far from being induced to seek with wretched worshippers of old to bring down heavenly things to meet the human condition, they loved to contemplate that future destiny on the most awful side. Along with these ardent longings, these incessant aspirations after the union of their souls with God, unearthly, pure as the cherub's light were all their conceptions of his nature; for hear how they speak of him: "Alone, without an equal, distinct from all things, by his infinite greatness, he possesses himself in the solitude of his being."‡ The Master of the Sentences remarked, however, as an example of the future society which is to be established between God and the reasonable soul glorified, that the soul has been joined to corporeal ligaments, and an earthly mansion, in order that man might know that since God can join together in one federation and friendship natures so dissimilar as body and soul, it will not be impossible for him hereafter to exalt the humility of the rational creature to a participation of his glory.§ But how is the promise to be realized on earth? "What flesh," cries the Sibyl, "can endure to behold the God of heaven, who dwells in light inaccessible, since mortals cannot even stand against the

sun with unaverted eyes?"* St. Augustin distinguished three kinds of visions; the corporeal through the outward senses, the spiritual through the imagination and fancy, and the forms of corporeal things, and the intellectual, which is without such forms.†

According to Cardinal Bona, the scholastics deny, the mystics affirm, that a pure intellectual vision can be given in this mortal life.‡ Yet it was not found difficult to reconcile them, by the illustrious teachers who came forward in that twofold capacity. "All intellectual thought," says St. Bonaventura, "must be impure, because it can only apprehend things by means of phantasms, and can only conceive God phantastically; whereas seraphic love illuminates the soul without phantasms, and is, therefore, a nobler attainment of truth."§ To this there would be no dissenting voice in the school. Whatever may be their difference in respect to terms, both agree in holding that the vision which, as St. Augustin says, is the whole reward of faith,|| may be partially enjoyed on earth. Nothing, it is true, can surpass the humility with which the schoolmen speak of the vision of God, as may be witnessed in the work of John Scot Erigena, entitled *De Visione Dei*; or also elsewhere, when he treats on the supersensual nature and cause of all things.¶

"O Lord!" exclaims St. Anselm, "with my whole heart I seek thy face, *Vultum tuum Domine requiro*. But certainly thou dost dwell in light inaccessible—and where is that light? or how can I approach to light inaccessible? What shall thy servant do who is cast so far from thy face, though he was made for beholding thee? O, I beseech thee, send me not away empty, who came hungering to seek thee! I will not attempt, O Lord, to penetrate thy altitude; for my intelligence is not comparable to thine; but I desire to understand a little of thy truth, which my heart believes and loves: not that I seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe that I may understand; for I believe this also, that unless I believe, I shall not understand."**

St. Gregory, in his *Morals*, says that "whoever beholds wisdom, which is God, dies to the present world; for no one who lives after the flesh can behold Him, be-

* Geschichte, tom. iii. l. 351.

† Serm. X. de Verb. Dom.

‡ Petr. Lomb. Lib. ii. Dist. 1.

§ Tertullian.

* Clem. Alex. Strom. v. 14.

† De Genesi ad Liter. xii. 6, 7.

‡ Bona de Discret. Spirituum, 17.

§ Mystica Theologica.

|| De Trinit. l.

¶ De Divis. Nat. l.

** S. Anselmi Prosologium, cap. l.

cause no one can, at the same time, embrace God and the world." That it is necessarily death to see God, is explained thus by Marius Victorinus:—"If any one should see God, he must die, because the life and intelligence of God are in themselves, not in act; but every act is external, and our life is thus external: therefore, it is death to see God. We must, consequently, abandon external life if we wish to see God, and that will be death to us; for it will be the being made similar to what we behold." Thus discourseth this most obscure writer. Nor are there wanting examples of this death. The seraphic virgin, Catherine of Sienna, often experienced this angelic death; and her soul became separated from all her organs, being absorbed in God, for in this state the body is deprived of its senses. Many other saints have similarly experienced the mystic death.*

The physical consequences of such visions have been observed with the eyes of science, and their reality cannot be questioned. St. Philip Neri, in his thirty-first year, on the feast of Pentecost, experienced an ecstasy of divine love and joy, in which he lay on the earth dissolved. On returning to himself, he found that his breast, over the heart, was swelled to the thickness of a hand. He lived fifty-two years after this event, but the expansion which gave more room to the heart remained unchanged to his death. In prayer, and at the altar, he used to suffer intensely from the internal flames which attended the wondrous activity of the organ, which so shook his shuddering frame that its trembling affected the entire chamber. On his body being opened after death, it was found that two of his left ribs had been broken, and the heart prodigiously enlarged. Goërres states the whole result of the anatomical examination, and the declaration of the physicians that it had a cause supernatural. Many other instances of a similar kind are well authenticated. Herrmann Joseph, of Steinfeld, experienced ecstasies which produced such effects upon his whole organic system, that, as they chiefly occurred on the festivals of the Church, he used to say, *Festa sunt mihi infesta*.† Let the reader remember what was observed in the Fifth Book, and he will be able to conceive to what numbers the festivals of the Church were thus terrible.

St. Bernard, indeed, says this vision is not of the eyes, but of the heart, to which the

Lord has promised it: this is the proper good of the heart.* But that the promise obtains in some measure, even in this life, a more literal fulfilment, was evidently the general conviction. To the perfect wisdom there was known to be a triple way—the purgative, the illuminative, and that of union, which included the divine vision,† that is, a joy which without it is inconceivable. How should not He be seen who was ever present? According to the words, "I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of my rest."

Of the mystic visions of God, of heaven, and of the saints, imparted to the blessed clean of heart, in ages of faith, it would be difficult to speak. Goërres, in his admirable work, has ventured to treat upon the wondrous things recorded of many of them. To Lidwina of Scheidam they were given during twenty-four years. Veronica of Binasco and Frances of Rome beheld the whole life of the Saviour, from his birth to his passion and death. Lucia of Narni, and Johanna of Jesus Maria, in Burgos, beheld all the stages of our Lord's passion,—visions granted to so many, that Goërres treats of them in a separate class, under the title of Mystic Stations.‡ The vision of heaven described by Mary of Agreda is related in Spanish, in the great volume entitled, *The Mystic City of God*, which has been translated into many languages. Mary of Oignys used to behold our Lord at the different festivals, in the act of accomplishing the mystery which each commemorated. The light which St. Theresa saw was totally unlike our light: she declared that she beheld and learned in it, in one moment, such a multitude of things, that many years of meditation would not have enabled her to attain to the thousandth part of them. Herrmann Joseph of Steinfeld, when in the early choir the *Benedictus Deus Israel* was sung, used to fall into ecstasy, and behold a vision of angels. At the words of the Antiphon *propter nimiam Charitatem suam*, and the response of the choir for Easter, *Et David cum Cantoribus*, Beatrix of Nazareth beheld the brightness of the heavenly Jerusalem, and heard sounds so sweet and wonderful, that she fell to the ground. What was seen and heard in mystic visions by Christina of Stumbele, Catherine of Sienna, Joseph of Copertino, Magdalen of Pazzi, Dominicus of Jesu Maria, the Carmelite, Osanna of Mantua, and others, is attested by evidence

* Bona de Discret. Spirituum, 234.

† Goërres *die Christliche Mystik*, ii. 6. 11.

* De Divers. Serm. ii.

† Henric. de Palma *Mystica Theologia* Prolog.

‡ II. 471.

which cannot be rejected without rejecting all human testimony.*

With such facts before them, it is not to be wondered at that Hugo of St. Victor and all the great philosophers of the middle age should have understood the seeing of God, which is to recompence the pure, to imply a temporal as well as an eternal vision. In effect, the whole spiritual life, and all contemplation and ascetic philosophy, signified nothing but an interior union with God, in which he was present and mystically revealed to the eyes of the mind. "They who have the Spirit of God," says Hugo, "see God; for they have that eye enlightened with which God can be seen." "The heat of the sun," observes St. Ambrose, "penetrates the most solid dwellings, and extends to the hidden roots of trees under the earth; and how must not the intellectual splendour of God shine into the hearts and thoughts of men!"†

Truly astonishing was the experience of the speculative as well as unconscious esoteric mysticism of the ages of faith, vivifying and illuminating above all sense and reason. Richard of St. Victor compares it to what befel the two disciples going to Emmaus. "What is it," he asks, "to have Christ, that is, the wisdom of God, present in a foreign species, unless to behold truth, not in its simplicity, but in a mirror or enigma? Without the house, as if in a journey, this vision is shown when the contemplation of sublime things is enjoyed by ecstasy, and as if in passing: it is as when two are going forth and walking—when reason and intelligence, exceeding human limits, by theft and surprise attain to the spectacle of sublime things."‡ "To attain God in mind," says St. Augustin, "is great beatitude." Richard of St. Victor, treating on the preparation of mind for contemplation only, says, "In this double church of thoughts and desires, in this unanimity of studies and of wills, the contemplative mind is divinely exalted.§ What means," he asks, "that dividing of the soul and spirit, of which the apostle speaks, but that the spirit is separated from what is lower, that it may rise to the highest? It is separated from the soul, that it may be united to God—that it may adhere to Him, and so become one spirit with Him. O happy division and separation to be longed for, when what is passible, what is corruptible, dies with its

passions, and what is spiritual, what is subtile, is sublimated to the vision of the divine glory, and transformed into its image."*

This was the end of all philosophy in ages of faith; this was the true object of all love of wisdom: "for what skills it," cries Duns Scotus, "to know the triple primacy of the first Being, the order and emanation of essentials and of notionals—to show with philosophers by natural reason, or with Catholics with certainty, though in an enigma, the perfection and immensity, the unity and singularity, of that first radical nature,—unless by well-doing, praying, and contemplating, the eye be purified and the affections purged as Scot requires; so that the glorious God may be truly seen and tasted in Himself, to whom be honour for ever. Amen."†

If any philosophers, at the syren voice of knowledge, seemed to linger in the rudiments of this world, as if they thought that life were given for the end of merely seeking and investigating truth, there was a mystic voice from the desert, which penetrated the schools of the middle ages, like that which awakened Dante and his guide when standing fixed in mute attention to hear Casella's song; and which caused them to depart with hurried step, when it exclaimed,—

"How is this, ye tardy spirits?

What negligence detains you loit'ring here?

Run to the mountain, to cast off those scales

That from your eyes the sight of God conceal."‡

Towards the end of his commentary on the work of Dionysius, Hugo of St. Victor breaks out in these terms:—"I wish that my soul may never, through earthly stain, lose the brightness of interior light, or through the cold of sin dispel the holy fervour of devotion; but that, being from heaven enlightened and warmed, it may be changed into the likeness of God. O the blessed existence, that is united with the existence of all existences! O the blessed nature, which is fulfilled with the nature of all natures! What happiness would be comparable to such beatitude?"

Henceforth, reader, to the end of this Book we must proceed, as schoolmen say, without arguments. We are now so near the summit, that I feel the air is not for beings like myself. Hitherto I have followed at a distance the clean of heart, but now can follow them no more—my course

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 247—57.

† Officiorum Lib. i. 14.

‡ De Erudit. Hom. Inter. i. Lib. i. 20.

§ De Præparat. an. ad Contemp. c. 84.

* De Extermin. Mali, p. i. tract. iii. c. 18.

† Id. de Primo Principio, cap. iv.

‡ Purg. ii.

here bounded, as each artist's is, when it doth touch the limit of his skill. They who ascend higher must have bared the feet, and cast off all impediments that weigh the spirit down—as we are admonished by the verses of Isseltius, prefixed to the ladder of paradise, which now may be within view, like the words which men find inscribed upon the rocks as they climb the craggy path which leads to some cloister far renowned :—

*"Quisquis ad hunc montem Climacum lecturus
adibis*

Sis monitus ; nudo non licet absque pede.

Si secus accedas, nil hic mirabile cernes,

Omnia sordebunt ut male culta tibi.

*Solve prius soles, dabiturque videre Jehovaham,
Ardentemque rubum, multaue digna Deo."*

All that we can do will be to approach humbly to the holy brethren who sit here, to repose awhile, and hear them speak of what they see above, and tell how mortals can proceed farther, and describe the effects which immediately result from reaching to that loftiest point of purity and joy on earth.

"As long as the soul," says Hugo of St. Victor, "had its triple eyes—those of the flesh, of reason, and of contemplation—open and unobscured, it saw clearly and rightly distinguished. But after the darkness of sin had entered, the eye of contemplation was extinguished, so as to see nothing ; the eye of reason became weak, so as to see vaguely ; and alone the eye of the flesh retained its full perspicacity. Hence it is that the hearts of men more easily consent to the things which they perceive with the eye of the flesh than to those which they attain with the sense of reason or the faculty of the mind ; because where they see without darkness they do not differ in judging. Man, therefore, having the eye of the flesh, can see the world and the things which are in the world ; likewise, having the eye of reason in part, he can see the mind partly, and the things which are in the mind ; but because he has not the eye of contemplation, he cannot see God and the things which are in God."* This is restored to him by purity of heart, and by a participation in the mysteries of faith, yielding an obscure but supernatural light. In what sense the former was understood, as connected with life and philosophy, has been shown in the commencement ; but in immediate relation to the vision of God, it still remains to hear what the ancient teachers say. Blessed John of the cross, in his ascent of Mount Carmel,

compares the stages of the soul's progress to three stages of the night : the first answering to the night of the passions, when they are mortified and laid asleep ; the second to the state of the soul, which seeks the privation of every thing in order to rest solely upon faith, becoming insensible to the light of the senses and of the imagination, which is the mortification of the intelligence ; the third to the withdrawing of the memory from things created, to fixing it upon God the Creator. The first of these, he says, may be compared to the hour of night-fall, which first involves all ways in obscurity ; the second, which is the night of faith, resembles midnight, when every thing is invisible ; the third corresponds with the last watch of the night, or, rather, with break of day, to which succeeds the light of the glorious sun, or the full possession of the sight of God. This is more briefly expressed by St. Augustin, saying, "Inasmuch as they die to this world, men see God ; and inasmuch as they live to it, they see Him not."* The fire of passion falls upon them, and they see not the light of the sun.†

Richard of St. Victor describes in another manner the progress of this illumination :—"What is it to enter the cloud at the approach of the divine vocation, unless, to depart in mind, and to darken in it, as it were by a cloud of oblivion, the memory of adjacent things. Hence, also, the lucid cloud overshadowed the disciples of Christ. One and the same cloud overshadowed them by shining and illuminated by overshadowing them ; because it both illuminated to divine and clouded over to human things."‡ This was felt by Dante, after he had looked upon the everlasting splendour ; for then he said,—

"My tongue shall utter now no more

*E'en what remembrance keeps, than could the
babe's*

That yet is moisten'd at his mother's breast."§

"We must first," says Richard elsewhere, "desert Egypt and pass the sea ; the Egyptian food must first fail, before we can receive the celestial aliment. Let him pass the Red Sea, let him study to expel all grief and bitterness from his heart, and then he may be satiated with internal sweetness. The Egyptians must be subdued, perverse manners must perish, lest the angelic citizens should disdain a degenerate guest. Beyond a doubt the love of God, the more fully it conquers every other affection, the more abundantly does it refresh the soul with in-

* De Sacramentis, Lib. i. p. x. c. 2.

* De Doct. Christ. ii. 7.

† De Contemplat. l. v. c. 2.

† Ps. 57.

§ Par. xxxiii.

ternal sweetness. In this state the mind sucks honey from the rock, and oil from the hardest stone; in this state the mountains distil sweetness, and the hills flow with milk and honey; in this state the Lord often descends from heaven, and visits him that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death: but while he exhibits his presence, he showeth not his face; as yet clouds and darkness are around him; as yet his throne is in the column of the cloud; and although he appears in fire, it is yet more a kindling than an illuminating flame; for it kindles the affection, but not as yet enlightens the understanding: the soul, therefore, while in this state, sees as if in the night, as if under the cloud, as if in a mirror or enigma, but not yet face to face.* In the meanwhile, love ought always to increase in us from knowledge, and, nevertheless, knowledge from love; so that, by a mutual ministration, they may both conduce to the growth of each other. "From the visible world," he continues, "is the Creator seen. This vision is common to the evil and to the good, for in this manner all men see God; in this manner the philosophers saw him, who yet did not find him by love. He passes to man as in an image of his soul, by reason and intelligence; he passeth, however, not to all men, but only to the good and spiritual, who find in themselves an image of God, according as they advance to perfection. Yet good men, however holy, see him only in the night, and in obscurity; for, as blessed Job speaks, 'the stars are darkened by the shades of this night'; for even they who shine by virtues and sanctity of life are obscured by the darkness of human blindness. Vices obscure and prevent contemplation; so that, until the mirror of the soul is made clean, there can be no faithful refraction of images. But to the eyes of a clean heart, God shines as in a mirror, which is clear as he is clear, and holy as he is holy. The pure of heart passeth in this manner to the Author of purity, from saints to the Saint of saints, where he finds his beloved."†

St. Bonaventura, having shown that the vision of God is to be obtained by love, proceeds in this manner:—"There is a two-fold mode of attaining to that ardour of love—one scholastic and common, the other mystic and secret. The first is by way of inquisition and elevation, beginning from inferior things and ascending to the summit

by exercise, by meditation and philosophic reasoning from the phenomena of nature; the second mode of rising to God is far nobler and more easy, and that is the unitive wisdom, in the desire of love by flaming affections, the knowledge of God by ignorance, in which the mind abandons all things and gives up itself, and is illuminated by the resplendent rays of inscrutable wisdom, in which there is no need of previous investigation or meditation; and this is attained by humility and prayer, and the immediate descent of the Holy Spirit; from which it follows that the soul always tends to God as directly as a stone falls to the earth.* "The vision of God," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "which by nature is granted to the philosopher, is communicated by grace to the clean of heart, which is the light of faith, to which the intelligence ascends by ten degrees—by hearing the wisdom of faith, by appeasing the movements of passion in the mind, of which Daniel says, 'The four winds of heaven contended in the great sea,' that is, the worldly mind, by raising the mind from sensible to insensible things, by meditating on spiritual things, by discerning in them truth from falsehood, for the spiritual man judgeth all things, that is, all things which relate to life and justice. These five things relate to the discernment of the science of faith; but the rest which follow regard adhesion to the science of faith: the first of which is to delight in truth, the second to perfect the mind by truth, of which the prophet says, 'Et veritas tua, O Deus! unque ad nubes,' the third to rest in its complacency, 'congaudet veritati,' the fourth to admire it; and the fifth is consummate faith, to which is given by grace the knowledge of God, as is written, 'God appears to those who have faith in Him.' Thirdly, the vision of God is communicated by glory—yet not permanently, but in a transitory manner, according to St. Bonaventura in his illuminations, and to Alexander de Hales, who says that by the perfect, by perfect contemplation, God can be seen, yet not fully, as after this life; for as Gregory saith, 'Sapientia abscondita est ab oculis omnium viventium;' for he can be seen by certain circumscribed images, but not by the uncircumscribed light of eternity. Yet the eternal brightness of God has been intellectually seen by some, as by Jacob and the apostle Paul; for the former says, 'Vidi Dominum facie ad faciem et salva facta est anima mea;' and the latter speaks of his being caught up to heaven by a miraculous

* De Quat. Gradibus Violentæ Charit.

† Ric. S. Vict. in Cant. Canticor.

* Mystica Theologia.

operation of divine virtue. Blessed, then, the clean of heart, who, with the simple eye of their heart looking to God, contemplate celestial secrets to his glory—here by excellent grace, and hereafter by consummate glory."*

It still remains to supplicate these angels upon earth, to mention briefly the effects which resulted from this mystic union of the soul with God. But first we may remark, that in their own wisdom they exemplify what by their teaching they attest: for, ask the biographer of St. Thomas, from whence did the Angel of the School derive his wisdom? Touron will reply, that he drew it in great measure from the close union of his soul with God, from the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, and of his cross. From the same fountain of living splendour were all the blessed luminaries of the ages of faith kindled and sustained. This it was, which raised the humble mind in a moment to understand more reasons of eternal truth, than could otherwise be known by one who had studied his whole life long in the schools: this it was, which yielded to the holy patriarch of hermits, Antony, that gift of wisdom, and that gift of faith, which made him such a wonderful ruler over the spirits of men, enabling him to convert innumerable heathens, and to draw after him to the desert thousands who already believed in Christ.† From this proceeded that sudden miraculous proficiency in mental attainments, not alone in wisdom, but in learning and science, which was seen in the Abbot Rupertus of Deutz, near Cologne, in the thirteenth century, in Albertus Magnus, in St. Lawrence Justinian, in St. Ignatius of Loyola, in Henry Dilon, in Charles of Saëta, in Candidus the Cistercian, in Hermannus Contractus, and in many others, including religious women, as Margaret the Dominicaness, Catherine of Cardona, Osanna of Mantua, Catherine of Sienna, and Rosa of Lima.‡ Yet, no doubt, than these extraordinary results, no less wondrous was the gift of faith—the principle and foundation of all other gifts.

"To the soul that seeketh him with a constant intention," says Richard of St. Victor, "God revealeth himself, in whose presence it is renewed, and, as if adhering to him, it perceives a sweetness of internal taste, a spiritual intelligence, an illumi-

nation of faith, an increase of hope, an emotion of charity and compassion, a zeal of justice, a delight in virtue. Enlightened by this grace it begins to see the darkness of its heart, and to know itself, to perceive how many vices are hidden there under the appearance of virtues: for in the soul a new day arises after the night of ignorance, and it rejoices to have found, though as yet only imperfectly and in vow, him whom it loveth."* Here then is revealed the secret of that intense faith, which characterised these ages, for, says Louis of Blois, "When the spirit of man attains to that wisdom of mystic theology, namely, to that divine union, it is then illuminated with the light of eternal truth, its faith is rendered more certain, its hope is strengthened, its charity is inflamed. Therefore, if all the wise men of the world were to say to the man who had experienced the mystic union, 'you are deceived, wretched man, your faith is not true,' he would undoubtedly answer, 'nay, it is you who are deceived, for my faith is most true and most certain:' this he would answer firmly, having an ineffable foundation in his heart, not so much by the investigation of reason as by the union of love. Such a man certainly knows divinity better than the greatest number of learned masters, who, not being as yet admitted into the holy of holies, and into the secret chamber of the Eternal King, have not been greatly illuminated with the light of grace."† A Catholic philosopher of modern times has remarked this fact, that "it happens often in the sphere of faith, in relation to science and religion, that what in the beginning was merely a rational belief, changes afterwards by degrees into a deep and inward faith, a conviction still profounder, more personal, nay almost into an internal intuition or actual view of living truth."‡ Frederick Schlegel, perhaps, had not read the passage of the schoolman, in which he explains the cause of this phenomena, showing how piety assists reason, and reason excites piety. "The mind," says Hugo of St. Victor, "strengthened by reasonings, is excited to a more fervent devotion. Thence arises the third and perfect state of religion; for the man, being purified by devotion, begins to have a certain foretaste of the future, and with a clean heart hastens to that which is known by faith and devotion.

* Sermo X.

† Goërres *die Christliche Mystik*, i. 197.

‡ Id. ii. 196-207.

* Ric. S. Vict. in *Cantica Cant.*

† *Instit. Spirit.* cap. i.

‡ Schlegel, *Philosophie der Sprache*, 218.

So the purified conscience, by invisible testimony, and with a secret and familiar visitation of its God, is daily instructed and confirmed, in so much that it begins now to have him present by contemplation; and already by no reasoning, although the whole world should be turned into miracles, can it be separated from his faith and love. These, therefore, are the three steps of promotion in faith by which it rises to perfection. The first is to choose by piety, the second to approve by reason, the third to apprehend by truth.*

This mystic state is described by Hugo of St. Victor in a passage most remarkable.† "There are three visions of the rational soul—thought, meditation, and contemplation. Thought is when the mind is touched transitorily with a notion of things; meditation is a certain curious and sagacious power of mind, endeavouring to investigate obscure, and to unravel complicated things; contemplation is that vivacity of intelligence, which having all things open, comprehends them with manifest vision, so that what meditation seeks, contemplation possesses. In meditation there is, as it were, a certain struggle of ignorance with science, and the light of truth shines as if in a certain middle state of darkness—like as fire at first with difficulty seizes upon green wood, but, when with wind vehemently excited, it begins to burn with greater intensity in the subject matter, then we see rise vast globes of smoky darkness, and the flame itself scarcely at rare intervals can be discerned, until, at length, the conflagration by degrees increasing, all vapour being exhausted, and darkness dissipated, the serene splendour may appear. Then the conquering flame rushing through the whole mass of the crackling pile, freely dominates, flying round the subject matter, and licking it with all pervading touch, burns and penetrates, nor rests until pervading it through its most intimate recesses, it draws all that it finds not itself into itself. But after that which is to be burned has lost all property of its own, and wholly passed into the similitude of fire, then all noise ceases, and every sound is hushed—the straws of flame raised aloft are borne away, and that cruel voracious fire, having subjected all things to itself, and incorporated them into a certain friendly similitude, composes itself into a deep and silent

peace; because it now finds nothing different from itself nor opposed to it. So in like manner the carnal heart, as if green wood, not yet dried from the humour of fleshly concupiscence, if any spark of the divine fear or love should fall upon it, at first, indeed, arises the smoke of passions and perturbations, reluctant with depraved desires; then, the mind being strengthened when the flame of love begins more fiercely to burn, and more clearly to shine, all the darkness of perturbation ceases, and the soul with a pure mind pours itself out to the contemplation of truth. But, finally, after that the heart becomes penetrated with an assiduous contemplation of truth, and that with all the affection of the soul, it enters wholly into the very fountain of highest truth, then, as if become itself all fire, and changed into the flame of love, the noise and perturbation die away, and it rests in that supreme peace. Then, truly, when he is received with that intimate love, that besides himself there is nothing else left remaining in the heart, God is discerned to be all in all."

The result of this mystic elevation of the highest spiritual faculties is ecstasy—whatever that may be to the souls which suffer it, and they were many, as the Church attests. Angela of Foligny remained three—Ignatius Loyola, seven—Magdalen of Pazzi, eight days in ecstasy. Seven times each day Elizabeth of Spalbach was thus transported. The whole lives of some were ecstatic. The hermit Macarius spent nearly all his life in ecstasy, and the same is related of St. Francis of Assisi, Giles his disciple, Columba of Rieti, Gertrude of Oosten, Joseph of Cupertino, and many others. Ecstasy in confession, as to Magdalen de Pazzi—ecstasy in communion, as to Catherine of Genoa, and innumerable saints—ecstasy in preaching, as to John of the cross—ecstasy in performing the ceremonies of holy week, as to Thomas of Villanova—ecstasy in singing, as to Christina of Stumbelen, and Petrus Petronius, the Carthusian—ecstasy in death, as to holy men and women without number, who departed singing in unearthly tones, to the embraces of their God,* were the gifts bestowed upon the clean of heart, in the churches, cloisters, and even secular houses of the ages of faith.

* De Sacrament. Lib. i. p. x. c. 4.

† A Masterpiece of Middle Age Latinity.

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 398. 402. 404.

At one time the brightness of the mystic vision rendered them invisible, as in the instances related of Hermann Joseph of Steinfeld, Nevelo of Faventia, and the holy Bona of Pisa.* At another it encompassed them with heaven's own blessed light, visible even to others. While St. Bernardine was preaching in St. Martin's church, at Sienna, all the people beheld an illumination round him. Similarly St. Francis de Sales, while explaining the ten commandments, was encircled with a light which every one saw. The countenance of Camillo de Lellis, while he was preaching on the love of God, began to shine like the sun. At midnight, Esperanza of Brenegalla, in Valencia, adoring the blessed Sacrament, was found encompassed with a splendour which lighted up the whole Church. The streams of lustre which issued from Hieronyma Carvallo, prevented the beholders from seeing the countenances of the poor gathered round him, who asked alms. The holy priest William, of the Cistercian order, beheld a light encircling the blessed John, as he sung the song of Zacharias, and directed the prior to notice it, who asked him, what had been his thoughts while they sung "Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel:" he replied, "I thought I was in heaven surrounded with angels." The prior again asked him concerning what he had in mind at the verse, "Et tu puer Propheta:" when he answered, "I felt as if John the Baptist stood before me, and I became senseless through joy."

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and the holy Hedwig of Poland, were both seen while praying, encompassed with a miraculous light, and the same is related of many others.† It was during such intervals that the transcendent prodigies, with which all holy history rings, were effected. It was then that the bodies of the saints were elevated above the ground,‡ transported from place to place,§ ended with a celestial fragrance,|| given a taste of ineffable sweetness,¶ instantaneously healed from diseases, extatically assimilated by the divine Saviour, marked with a bleeding crown, pierced in the side,** stigmatised to the complete imitation of the Son of God.†† Then did they enjoy those gifts, which so visibly bespeak the joys of a world unlike ours—the gift of tears, streaming delicious tears—tears that were a wonder, and rightly

denominated a gift from heaven, such a bliss spread through the soul as soon as they flowed forth, like the waters of a river, sweeping away black sorrow and disquietude, and trembling doubts; then came there the gift of jubilation ineffable, inconceivable, producing insensibility to all material objects around—the gift of utterance too of words, that surpass human intelligence, of tones unearthly, as if all that the soul had ever learned here below, were already blotted out and forgotten; and so in truth they were at least while that high triumph lasted, for in that heavenly banqueting, the soul, as Dante saith, outgrows herself, and in the transport lost, held now remembrance none of what she was.*

The uncertain and hidden things of divine wisdom are made manifest to her. "Were such intervals to be granted unto all who studied holiness, faith would lose its merit." says one who had endured them; for what profane person would not hail such consolation, if he could be sure of obtaining it? Such joys exceed all the delights of the world, and all the pleasures incident by nature to the heart of man. Then broke forth words of light, of seraphic fire, sounds surpassing all sense and reason. Witness those of Dionysius, speaking of seraphim, which Hugo of St. Victor concludes, "can be nothing else but words from a higher world." "Man," he observes, "does not speak so." "These words," he continues, "may be an echo of those unspeakable words which Paul heard when he was raised to the third heaven, and caught up to paradise. These words came from the word itself, they could not certainly be spoken by him who thoroughly understood them, but yet something could be imparted by them, and that is in the words which we read. They are great as telling of immensity, dark as relating to what is concealed, deep as concerned with what is incomprehensible. They sound like a voice from heaven, and fill us with amazement; but they enlighten us not. Even as some thought that they heard thunder, others an angel, not God himself, so also we. But our amazement must attract us higher, the words must become a sweeter music—an enjoyment, we must learn to love them; then we shall understand them. If I be less excited to knowledge I shall be incited to love, and meanwhile love itself will be refection, until from it will arise contemplation, by which illumination cometh."

* Goërres die Christliche Mystik, ii. 339—43.

† Id. ii. 310—313. ‡ Id. ii. 515. § 528.

|| 89. ¶ 86. ** 410. †† 420.

The holy Hildegard used to apply to things divine and human names that were unknown to others, and Goërrès has published a kind of Glossary to them, which is found in an ancient manuscript. He supposes that the images presented to her in mystic visions could not suggest the ordinary words of man.* But our limits are already overpast, we must not remain here longer, and even listening to such things, is not for ears of uncleansed flesh and blood. These living splendours of the times of faith, rise up now and move from our view. Intellectual extremes have met long enough while they conversed with us. They must proceed upwards, and we descend sorrowing, though not without hope to the blind sordid world again. Yet, reader, if it hath not been thy lot to mourn always with the lost and separate, there must be light prepared for thee below, for thou must have known some faithful tender souls to which these visions have been granted. Thou must have observed the silence, the motionless suspension, the tears, the overflowing joy when Christ appears in humble veil upon the lighted altar. Then thou canst understand the long tract of ages by the holy past; then thou canst, in some degree, conceive with what hopes they looked forward to the clearer vision of another world; for, if such be the victim, self-annihilated as it were on the altar, what will be the Creator visible in his glory? The mystic view, intelligential and obscure, is peace to the heart of man, what will be the unveiled and perfect manifestation of the eternal godhead? "*Reliquiæ cogitationum diem festum agent tibi*," saith the prophet king. "Think," adds Richard of St. Victor, "what will be the solemnity in the abundance of that view if a festival is celebrated out of the leavings of thoughts."†

Some there are, albeit, adorned with bewitching smiles, whose heart, save their Maker, none can to the full possess, watching it no less than she above, who would have all her court be like herself. One have I known, who not from that day when on this earth I first beheld her charms, has ever ceased with inward song adoring to converse with Christ, his blessed mother, and the saints. O thou pure and loving soul, what will it be after so many prayers, so many genuflexions, so many stolen vigils in the stillly night, so many communions

prepared for with all thy poor strength, so many kisses bestowed upon the crucifix and holy relics ever next thy bosom, so many aves murmured on the beads, so many tears and prostrations while singing "*Tantum ergo* and *O Salutaris Hostia*," at the benediction of each closing day, which to thee even in youth was joy, mirth, rapture, every thing—what will it be, I say, after all this life of expectation and desire infinite, of alternate joy and sorrow, of light and darkness passing through the heart, to behold thy God, where days end not, where blessed moments change not, where the vision of glory fades not through eternal years? O spirit, born for joy, who in the rays of life angelic, dost already taste that sweetness, what will be thy radiance then? And where will be the poor heart dwelling within this dust, that now can only wonder at thy beauty?

A smile sits painted on the cheek of these high teachers, and their fixed gaze bends on the point at which my vision fails—then their words resuming, they begin, "let us behold with the blessed thy countenance, O Christ God, the joy which is immense and excellent! O, what delight to mix in the choir of angels, to be in perpetual society with patriarchs and prophets, with holy Apostles and martyrs, with confessors and virgins, with the glorious Mary, mother of God! No more fear, no more sorrow, no more indifference, no more fatigue, no more vexation. There is an end of labour and obstacles, of disgust and wants. O what riches of consolation, what affluence of delight, what overflowings of joy! What an abyss of pure pleasure to behold that boundless and beauteous light, that ineffable glory of the most holy Trinity, to see the God of gods on the mountain of Zion, to see him no longer in enigma, but face to face—to see the glorious humanity of the only Son of God!

O! what pure prayers were offered day and night before those altars of the middle age, imploring grace for virtue yet more high to understand—the supreme bliss. Truly, these were the generations seeking him—seeking the face of the God of Jacob. There methinks I see them kneel, beseeching him through saints and angels, and above all his mother ever blest, to drive each cloud of their mortality away, that on the sovereign joy unveiled they may soon for ever gaze. "Good Jesus," they exclaim with Thomas, "when shall I stand to behold thee? When shall I contemplate the glory of thy kingdom? When wilt

* *Die Christliche Mystik*, ii. 152.

† *De Grad. Charit.*

thou be to me all in all?" These perfect souls, as Richard of St. Victor wished, devoted to the contemplation of highest things, at every hour of their pilgrimage expected, with the utmost desire, the departure from their present labour, in order to behold that which they held through faith shown in itself intelligibly plain. Like Abraham who used to sit at the door of his tent; like Elias who used to stand at the mouth of his cave—they stood pre-

pared to go out to hail the Lord's coming.* "Quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei? My little sons," adds the saintly Bernard after repeating these words, "let us desire the courts of the Lord, let us breathe after them. Our country is there—let us, at least, adore it from a distance, let us from afar salute it."—Amen.

* De Contemplat. p. i. Lib. iv. c. 10.

END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.



